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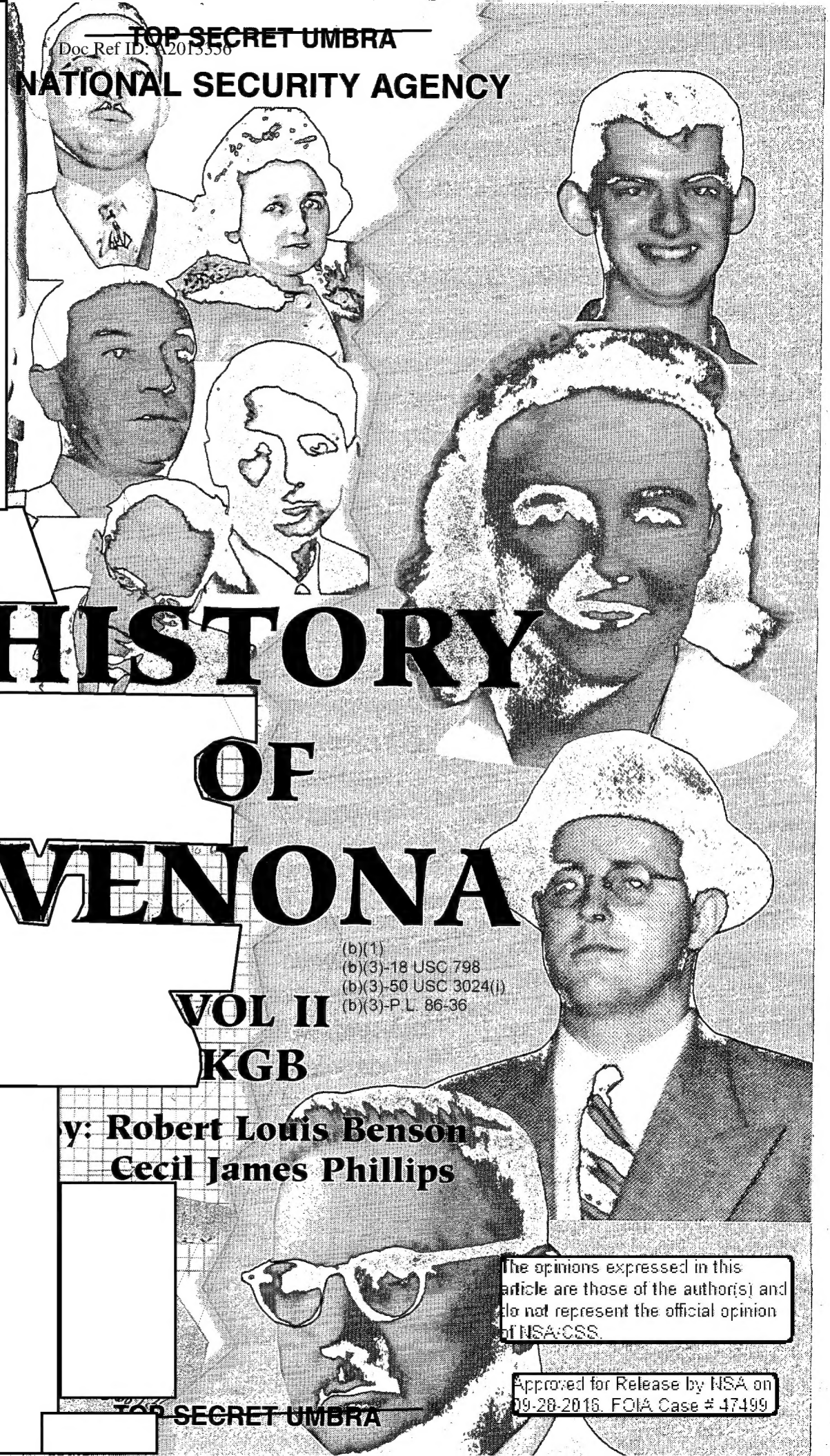

# HISTORY OF VENONA

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-P L. 86-36

## VOL II KGB

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# IX. THE VENONA DECRYPTS: INTRODUCTION, FACTS AND FIGURES

## A. Introduction to Volume Two

This second volume deals with the actual Venona decrypts — the translations of the KGB and GRU communications. In Volume One we quoted a number of Venona messages to highlight and illustrate the chronology of this program. Here we will give the text, or at least summarize, some hundreds of Venona messages in the case study chapters that follow. This volume concentrates on the KGB, though many GRU messages will be quoted. The third volume will deal with the GRU and GRU–Naval, and will close with a chapter on the later years of the Venona problem at NSA and GCHQ (the appendixes are also in the third volume).

It might be wise to repeat the warning given in Chapter I: this is not comprehensive history of U.S. counterintelligence or Russian espionage, and many of the case studies that follow will have only minimum context and will often lack investigative information — beyond a basic biography where available — about the spy. It will largely be a matter of letting Venona speak, making this a source book for further inquiry.

All the Venona translations, something in excess of 2100 messages, can be held in about three and a half cardboard boxes, fewer if only the final translation were to be retained. Some major messages have as many as 8 reissues: obviously for historical purposes all versions must be kept to trace what was known when.

The selection of case study chapters is somewhat arbitrary, but it seemed most useful to have a large number of them for easy reference, especially to the more famous or controversial cases. The methodology for using the translations is not entirely consistent. In quoting the translated text of a Venona message, the KGB or GRU covername is used with true name identification given in various ways: at the head of the chapter, in footnotes or in the discussion before or after the quoted message. On the other hand, if I only summarize a message or group of messages I may use the true name first and put the covername in parenthesis or a footnote etc.

The Venona team at NSA and GCHQ showed the utmost discretion and integrity in making the translations. They spent many years working on very touchy material and great precision was demanded. This approached something like biblical textual criticism — each word being carefully studied for the best meaning in translation; much attention to punctuation, message order and mumbering system. Early in the Venona program, and this may reflect the influence of GCHQ, the footnoting was pared down to certain standard forms: footnotes relating to technical or textual matters; footnotes that relate to actual intelligence information, e.g. the identity, that is the true name, of each covername in a message and a qualifier if needed. For example, the footnote might say that the covername was "possibly" X, or "probably" Y or that it was "unidentified covername". Often of course a positive identification had been made and the footnote would say so:

1. VIKTOR= Lt. General Pavel M. Fitin

But identifying footnotes rarely went any further, and one has to look elsewhere to find out who General Fitin was.[1] Even when the footnote went further, it was often to give the cover position of the KGB officer:

2. KhARON= Grigorij Kheifits, Soviet Vice Consul in San Francisco [instead of saying, KGB Resident, San Francisco]

Footnotes also identified special KGB cover or tradecraft terms and organizational designators.

[1] In the earlier translations, those by Meredith Gardner, we sometimes find footnotes that are both linguistic essays and counterintelligence comment. Also, some formats, especially where there are unidentified covernames, list other messages where that covername appears.

*IX. THE VENONA DECRYPTS: INTRODUCTION, FACTS AND FIGURES*

The point I want to make is that when I quote the text of a Venona message the quote will be verbatim, but I will usually not use the footnotes or footnote format that appears on the translations. On occasion I will use slightly different formats and some shortcuts or editorial aids.

As to the method of transliteration, I use whatever I'm quoting or take the most frequently used form — inconsistencies will appear.

B. Venona Facts and Figures

Venona is the largest and most authentic body of information on Russian intelligence tradecraft, policy, and operations. The detail is often spectacular. As Geoffrey Sudbury later wrote, "The KGB deserved a better fate". Another GCHQ Venona veteran, Alec Hobart, and others too, said much the same. The KGB ran a centrally controlled, world-wide and unbreakable cryptographic system — a manual system at that. The First Chief Directorate of the KGB and the Residents in the field ran what was surely the most elaborate and successful espionage operation ever. The level of professionalism, access to superior sources, rapid and voluminous reporting command respect. The breakdown was a most peculiar one and could not be attributed to any of the usual lapses of security. The KGB's own and the KGB selected code clerks and communications people made very few mistakes (except for the 1 May 1944 indicator change: see Chapter III). The system was betrayed by the bizarre circumstance of the manufacture of extra sets of key (one time pads) — after which the Arlington Hall cryptanalysts had a chance at least.

But that "chance" did not guarantee success. It was probably a near thing for the U.S. We had the right traffic on hand, several brilliant cryptanalysts, and a small but excellent supporting group. They were backed by the visionary leadership of Carter Clarke and Frank Rowlett and then supported in a two-way effort by Bob Lamphere and his colleagues.

But only a minority of the messages have ever been read. Many of the translations contain huge gaps — code groups that can never be recovered because the additive cannot be stripped for lack of a key pad match. Most KGB and GRU covernames appearing in Venona have not been identified. Almost all the traffic on the Moscow <—> London lane is missing; nor is US <—> Moscow coverage perfect. For all that the results were outstanding — and even those apparent shortfalls are not always what they seem.

In terms of messages and decryptions, exactly what are we counting? This is not an easy matter. Sudbury and others suggest that the only way to count is by matched pages — how many pages of one time pad did we match? However, that is a cryptanalytic answer. Most would want to know, and would be able to understand, some sort of percentage or batting average: so many messages sent, so many of them decrypted. The problems:

1. We do not know for sure how many messages were sent by each service for certain time periods.

2. The first count is against the external message number — but the internal numbers may show that several messages, on completely different subjects, were included in an externally numbered transmission. All parts of a message might not be breakable. But the external number is in any case a good way to reference a Venona message and message translation. For example, KGB NY —> Moscow Center, (external) No. 850, 15 June 1944 gives us handy look-up and filing references. It does not mean that the KGB had sent 850 messages up to that time, as the external numbering system was shared with other New York subscribers.

3. As the program proceeded, NSA and GCHQ issued individual translations for each external message number: a single translation issued for each decrypted externally numbered message. But in the early days at

least, some NSA translations bundle several messages together (and a later message-by-message reissue wasn't made).

4. An external number (see 2. above) only accounts for all messages sent on a lane by all subscribers. For example, No. 550 might be New York KGB; No. 551 the New York Consulate (the real Consulate that is); No. 552 the New York GRU Resident. Ratios are important in making projections where there are many unknowns. In other words what % of all traffic can we expect to be KGB or GRU etc?

5. By far the most important problem in trying to figure a batting average is to know what it is "fair" to count. In other words, 1941 messages simply cannot be matched: should they be part of the average?

The best way to look at Venona is from the standpoint of the years and lanes where we have matchable traffic. In his infamous book, Spycatcher, Peter Wright wrote that in spite of enormous effort, "less than 1%" of Venona traffic was ever read. This is seriously misleading and really quite wrong for the focus of this study, the US <—> Moscow lanes.

Here's a try, giving the figures — KGB only in this chapter — for the good years and the bad; the message statistics based on counting (and estimating) by external message numbers only:[2]

1. New York KGB —> Moscow Center

1939–1941: Essentially unmatchable and therefore unreadable. One translation out of more than one thousand messages sent (but most of these not collected or retained anyway). KGB NY sent an estimated 721 messages to Moscow in 1941 (the sole translation of 1939–41 material is from that year).

1942: New York KGB sent out an estimated 1277 messages. Of these only 496 were taken by Arlington Hall with very few of these matchable. This resulted in 23 translations, or a success average that can be calculated at least two ways:

a. 23 of 1277; or 1.8%

b. 23 of the 496 messages copied; or 4.6%

1943: Now it starts to get interesting. New York KGB sent an estimated 1356 messages, and 1007 of these were copied and 205 translations issued. Because we have good matching statistics for that year, the success average can be calculated in four ways (the translations are distributed as follows: 31 translations of May 1943 messages, 78 from June, 56 from July; the other numbers: Jan 0, Feb 1, Mar 1, Apr 1, Aug 5, Sept 9, Oct 9, Nov 4 and 7 in Dec):

a. 205 translations of 1356 sent; or 15%

b. 205 translations of 1007 messages copied; or 20.3%

c. 479 matched of 1007 copied; or 47.6%

d. 205 translations of 479 matched; or 42.8%

1944: The best Venona year by far for copying, matching and translating. Some 97.5% of all diplomatic traffic from NY to Moscow was taken, and for our purposes here we'll consider that all KGB traffic was copied. There were 418 translations. The averages:

a. 418 translations of 860 KGB messages; or 48.6%

[2] Cecil Phillips and I base these statistics and projections on our count of the message logs held in the Venona Collection. Complete statistics are in an appendix to this study.

b. 601 messages matched of 860 messages; or 69.9%

c. 418 translations of the 601 matches; or 69.5%

1945: Only 51 translations for the year of 1199 messages sent (half the translations are from January):

a. 51 translations of 1199 messages; or 4.2%

b. 87 matches; or 7.3%

c. 51 translations of the 87 matches; or 58.6%

The Moscow —> New York traffic is sparsely matched except for Spring 1945. The total translations, 1942:18; 1943: 4; 1944:2; 1945: 68 (34 in March, 15 in April).

2. San Francisco KGB <—> Moscow

The success rate for San Francisco —> Moscow has not been calculated but was quite high. The translations: 1943: 24 ; 1944: 96 translations; 1945: 82 translations. Unlike the New York or Washington lanes, the matches here extended into 1946 with a total of 24 translations from that year.

Moscow —> San Francisco was matched for later 1944 only and 27 translations resulted.

3. KGB Washington —> Moscow

The KGB did not communicate out of Washington until later in the Venona matching period (the New York Residency handled the Washington traffic). The only matches are for 1945 with 36 translations — out of the 2338 messages sent by Washington KGB that year (410 had been sent in 1944 and but 17 in 1943: no matches or translations for those two years). Unfortunately the Washington experience most closely resembles Peter Wright's gloomy, "less than 1%":

a. 0% success for 1943–1944

b. 36 translations of 2338 messages in 1945; or 1.5%

c. 57 matches of the 2338; or 2.4%

We will consider the GRU and GRU (Naval), and Mexico City traffic in separate chapters of this volume and also will comment separately on the London material and some of the other lanes. More details on the above KGB statistics will also be found in an appendix.

C. Translations, Covernames, and the Problem of Naming Names

Most translations of U.S. and London traffic were reissued at least once, and at least one message has 8 reissues. A translation would be reissued when missing parts of a message could be filled in or a better translation of an important word, phrase or term became possible. As the values in the KGB code books were found, Gardner and his colleagues would return to previously translated messages and fill in the gaps.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36



Significant anomalies exist, however. Some of Meredith Gardner's earliest translations do not seem to have been re-issued or put into the standard format (my assumption being that they could have warranted re-issue). Most significant perhaps is the inconsistency in updating covername identifications. For example we find some "final" translations — by which I mean the only translation ever done or the last reissue — where certain covernames are footnoted as unidentified or are misidentified (most often as "probably X" when it later turned out to be "Y"). This was not likely a problem for Gardner or Sudbury, or for Bob Lamphere. But it is a problem for the researcher today and points to one major problem with the translations: they were never put in a data base.[3]

As mentioned earlier, the translations are very sparing in CI commentary. Most of those who worked Venona believe it was best to present verbatim translations with no analytic commentary — much in keeping with the general Sigint reporting doctrine of the time. However, Sir Peter Marychurch and others believe the process could have been helped if those most familiar with the material, that is the Venona party, had done more CI analysis or commentary (not just as footnotes to the translations but in separate papers).

The translations vary from nearly 100% percent of the text down to hardly more than a few words surrounded by dozens or hundreds of unrecoverable groups. Many matched messages, especially in system [redacted] were not published because so little could be broken out (though these are logged and appearances of recovered covernames are accounted for).

Some important terminology and reporting format used in the Venona translations:

- Unrecoverable codegroups: an unmatched portion of a message and therefore these groups represent true one-time pad security; unbreakable.
- Unrecovered codegroups: not recovered as yet but theoretically recoverable and breakable. However, it should be noted that many of these passages were subjected to continuing attack over more than 25 years.
- A%, B%, C%, D%: levels of certainty (A% being certain, D% less so) where there are garbles or other factors that require some qualification in the translation. Occasionally (but not in the case study chapters of individuals) I ignore the qualifier and simply give the suggested word(s) or substitute "[probably]". We will shortly quote an important message that in some issues uses D% for a group, but in which the bookbreaker/translator states, in spite of the low rating, that it is nonetheless a likely degarble. The Venona party sometimes used other qualifying terminology too.

In his Venona study, Howard Vincent gave these final covername totals (only lanes of interest to our study noted):

[3] The final authority on covername identification is the Black Books: one volume for the KGB covernames on the New York, San Francisco and Washington lanes; a second volume for GRU and GRU (naval) covernames on U.S. and other lanes; and a third volume for KGB covernames on all other lanes (London, Bogota, Canberra, Mexico City, Montevideo, Istanbul, Stockholm, Hague, Havana and Sofia). These books contain typed (usually) covernames, by lane, in order of the Russian alphabet. The true name, when known, is entered in pen or pencil next to the covername. For each covername we find entries for each message that mentions that covername: date, external number, cryptanalytic worksheet number, and translation number, as well as a handwritten cross-reference to other covernames assigned to that individual. Mildred Hayes posted these books and saved them when the program closed down — Mildred told Cecil and me where to find the Black Books. There are of course various card indices, but this is the most important finding aid for our purposes.

*IX. THE VENONA DECRYPTS: INTRODUCTION, FACTS AND FIGURES*

KGB

| | Identified | Unidentified |
|---|---|---|
| New York | 221 | 322 |
| San Francisco | 67 | 75 |
| Washington | 7 | 8 |
| Mexico City | 44 | 52 |
| London | 13 | 11 |
| GRU (inc naval) | | |
| New York | 17 | 31 |
| Washington | 17 | 53 |
| London | 28 | 45 |

This count includes some public figures not under suspicion as well as a large number of Russian Intelligence Officers. It excludes covernames for organizations; cities, countries and nationalities and certain operations.[4]

This count suggests the scope of the KGB and GRU effort and the level of US–UK in making identifications. But at least two important points need to be made in the context of this study:

1. The London figures are based on GRU traffic of 1940–41 and 1945–46 and KGB traffic for only one week in September 1945. We would need to add at least 150 undetected and therefore unidentified covernames to London (likewise we would need to add to Washington, especially for 1945).

2. The majority of the unidentified U.S. covernames appeared 3 times or less (a calculation made by Bill Kulp, one of the last heads of the NSA Venona effort). A significant minority of these are undoubtedly Russians.

We then have two questions. Most important, how many unidentified American spies are represented by these 322 unidentified covernames? The second question is: how many covernames were never found in traffic in the first place and are therefore completely unknown?

The second question first. The 1944 coverage of New York (and San Francisco) KGB traffic is so outstanding that one might guess that we got almost all the covernames. In other words it is a superior statistical sampling. True, we have rather poor coverage for 1942 — but we might assume that most New York KGB spies active in 1942 would have been (even more) active in 1944. But some major gaps are possible: Los Angeles/Hollywood traffic, though slight in volume, is completely unexploitable. We would certainly expect to find KGB soldier Steve Nelson in that traffic (he has not been identified in Venona), as well as Haakon Chevalier, who tried to recruit J. Robert Oppenheimer. The GRU traffic is another problem: our level of exploitation is far below that of the KGB (but GRU traffic is quite high volume).

[4]Appendix E, page 2 of Vincent. This is not an easy count to make: I made several independent counts but could not get agreement and have therefore used Mr. Vincent's figures.

As for the principal question, how many unidentified covernames represent significant Russian agents, we can only guess. But we might be able to get some idea by looking at the identified covernames. By my count (which I believe is a bit low), I think the identified covernames represent the following number of Americans secretly in the service of the KGB or GRU:[5]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| KGB: | New York: | 103 |
| | San Fran: | 7 |
| | Wash DC: | 2 |
| GRU: | New York: | 7 |
| | Washington: | 0 |
| Naval GRU: | Washington: | 3 (plus at least 3 true name only agents) |

To these we add about 20 apparent KGB operatives who have been found in the traffic only under their true names. I would suggest adding 100 to this total of 145 identified covername agents and true name agents for a grand total of about 245 U.S. Venona agents[6].

The uncertainty of the count given above relative to even the identified covernames is based on a several factors. First, in a few cases I was not sure if the person should be counted as an American. More important, one cannot be sure if a person discussed in Venona was actually recruited or indeed if he or she should really be suspect in the first place.

Which brings us to one of the reasons Venona has always been considered so sensitive: names and the naming of names when the connection to the KGB or GRU is uncertain. Veterans of the Venona program are still concerned about that. They note that a covername does not mean the person is dirty. In some cases this is obvious: FDR, Churchill, Stimson and others have covernames —they are in the public figure category and are not at issue. In other cases, the KGB will discuss a recruitment, but we do not know if the recruitment was made. In a very few cases, it is quite unclear if the KGB sees the American in any clandestine role or merely as an "overt" source of information in the "line of cover". In the latter cases, the KGB officer, using TASS or consular cover, frequently meets with an American in the know — is it clandestine? Perhaps we cannot tell.

But I do not find that much mystery in most cases. When KGB New York describes someone as progressive, devoted to the Stalinist cause, a member of the Communist Party, interested in helping the Russian representatives in the U.S., and who comes with the recommendation of other KGB agents, one hardly has to wait for Moscow Center's approval in an operational or historical sense. Nonetheless, I do not always name names and occasionally go to some length to conceal the identity of the person.

[5] Some agents appear in different traffic lanes, such as the very busy Jack Katz. I count them only once, in their principal place of operation or the lane in which their name most often appears. The busiest and most productive (from the CI standpoint) lane, New York —> Moscow, does not of course mean that the spies were active in New York City. Most were in Washington, but the New York Residency controlled the NY–Washington nets and the communications, until 1945, were mostly out of New York rather than Washington.

[6] A serious analysis of the meaning of the unidentified covernames probably requires that the covernames and messages be put in a data base for better manipulation, including some statistical projections. In other words, right now it is difficult to give a good estimate of the number of unidentified spies.

*IX. THE VENONA DECRYPTS: INTRODUCTION, FACTS AND FIGURES*

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# X. ALGER HISS. COVERNAME : ALES

## A. Background

**Alger Hiss (covername ALES) on right.**

Beginning in 1939, in a conversation with A.A. Berle, a State Department official, Whittaker Chambers named government employee Alger Hiss as a GRU agent. Colonel Krivitsky (a defector from the KGB, and formerly a member of the GRU) also probably gave some information pointing toward Hiss. Chambers did not have much luck with Berle or later with the FBI. However, the Bureau reinterviewed Chambers in 1945 and events began to move from there. Chambers repeated his allegations in court and before Congressional committees. Hiss was eventually convicted of perjury in January 1950, essentially for denying that he knew Chambers, and sentenced to 5 years in prison. He served about 4 years in Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary. He always denied any espionage on behalf of the Russians.

Hiss, born in Baltimore in 1904, graduated from Johns Hopkins University and from Harvard Law School. He came to Washington in 1933 and first served in the Department of Agriculture, then as counsel to the Nye (congressional) Committee, and as an attorney in the office of the U.S. Solicitor General. He entered the State Department in 1936 serving as a special assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State 1936–39 and as assistant political advisor for the Far East, September 1939–Spring 1944, after which he was assistant to the director, Office of Special Political Affairs until he left State in February 1947. He was much involved in the Yalta Conference in February 1945, and in a photograph of one of the sessions can be seen seated directly behind FDR and Secretary Stettinius (and about 10 feet away from Stalin). He was a major participant at the San Francisco conference of April 1945 when the UN was founded. In a photograph we see him shaking hands with President Truman.

## B. Hiss in Venona

Hiss was identified as the subject of a 30 March 1945 KGB message sometime before 27 June 1950, the date of Bob Lamphere's covername report — in which he wrote that Venona covername ALES was probably

*X. ALGER HISS. COVERNAME : ALES*

Alger Hiss. An undated Meredith Gardner translation from 1949/50 is the earliest we have. The first GCHQ "red-ball" translation is dated 23 June 1954 and the NSA version we quote below — which is essentially the same as the first translation by Gardner — is from August 1969.[1]

**KGB Washington to Moscow Center**

**No. 1822**

**30 March 1945**

**Further to our telegram No. 283 [not found]. As a result of "[D% A.'s]" chat with "ALES" the following has been ascertained.**

**1. ALES has been working for the NEIGHBORS continuously since 1935.**

**2. For some years past he has been the leader of a small group of the NEIGHBORS' probationers, for the most part consisting of relations.**

**3. The group and ALES himself work on obtaining military information only. Materials on the "BANK" allegedly interest the NEIGHBORS very little and he does not produce them regularly.**

**4. All the last few years ALES has been working with "POL'" who also meets with other members of the group occasionally.**

**5. Recently ALES and his group were awarded Soviet decorations.**

**6. After the Yalta Conference, when he had gone on to Moscow, a Soviet personage in a very responsible position (ALES gave to understand that it was Comrade VYShINSKIJ) allegedly got in touch with ALES and at behest of the Military NEIGHBORS passed on to them their gratitude and so on.**

**No. 431** **VADIM**

A quick explanation of this message. Washington tells the Center that Hiss has been working for the GRU (the military NEIGHBORS) continuously since 1935, heading a small group of GRU agents (Probationers) that consisted of family members. Supposedly Hiss and his group were providing mostly military information to the GRU rather than much State Department (BANK) material.[2] He and the group not only got Soviet decorations but he got personal thanks in Moscow from GRU headquarters via Andrei Vishinsky. The message is signed by the KGB Washington Resident, Anatolij Gromov (covername VADIM).

As to the net consisting mostly of Alger's relations, Chambers' information put Donald Hiss (Alger's brother) in the GRU net and Priscilla Hiss seems to have taken an interest. There are some other possibilities too.

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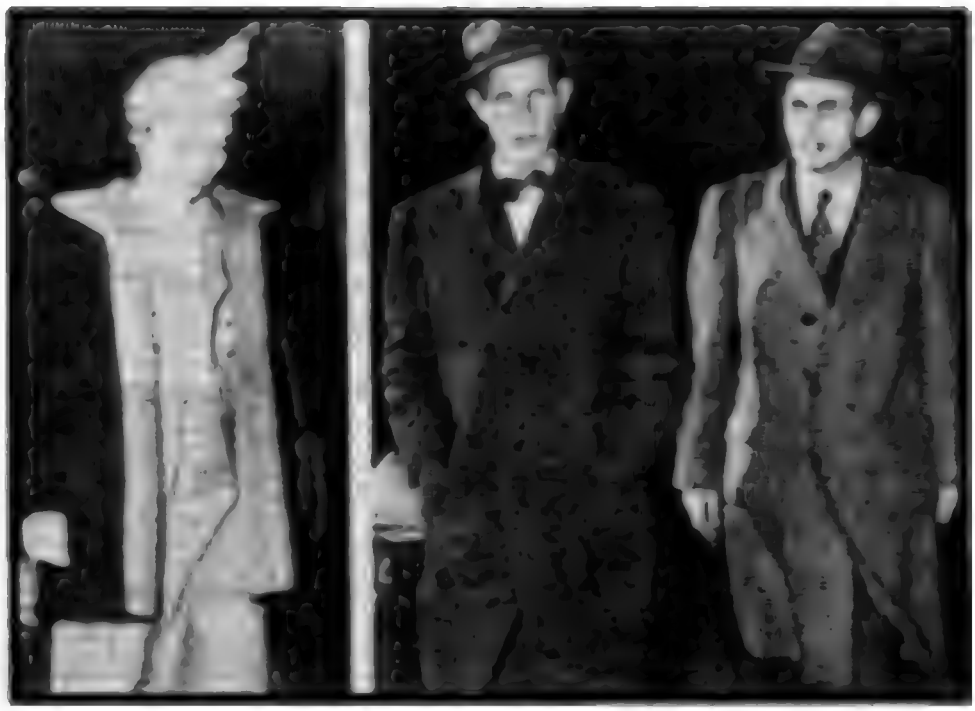
[1] The 1949/50 Gardner translation is found only in Volume II of "MKG's Translations"; the others are in the Eyes Only: Jim Lehr/Jack Butler envelope in D017 of the Venona Collection. In other words, none of these translations are found in the appropriate place in the regular translation boxes of the collection (though Mildred Hayes put a note in the folder that Butler had these translations). The message (raw traffic) is found in box I053 of the collection and the cryptanalytic worksheet is number JOB 16 on the worksheet shelves of the collection. In Gardner's first translation he does not identify ALES as Hiss, though Mr. Gardner has told me that he did believe that ALES was HISS — the covername itself and the circumstances would have made instant identification likely. Mr. Gardner also told me that in his opinion ALES was Hiss's GRU covername rather than a KGB covername. That is, the Center and ALBERT merely used the GRU's covername prior to taking over control of Hiss and giving him a new, and unknown to us, covername.

[2] Surely Hiss would have provided his handlers whatever came his way. I think the KGB was putting the best face on it: the most important Russian agent in the U.S. government had been in GRU hands for 10 years. The KGB Center might not have been pleased at that.



**"A small group of the NEIGHBORS probationers, for the most part consisting of relations". Left to right: Priscilla, Donald and Alger Hiss.**

We know that Hiss was at Yalta and then in Moscow. After the conference he flew to Moscow with Ambassador Averill Harriman, Secretary of State Stettinius, Chip Bohlen from State, and Ed Flynn, an old political ally of President Roosevelt.

*X. ALGER HISS. COVERNAME : ALES*

**ALES at Yalta, seated behind President Roosevelt, off his right shoulder.**

But who are "A." and "POL'" ? The footnote to the translation merely notes that, " 'A' seems the most likely garble here although 'A.' has not been confirmed elsewhere in Washington traffic." I'm perhaps missing something, but it would seem highly likely that "A." is KGB covername ALBERT, a major illegal who handled networks in New York–Washington. ALBERT was KGB officer Iskhak Abdulovich Akhmerov, much discussed in Chapters XIII. and XIV. and elsewhere in this study. According to former KGB senior officer, Gordievsky (in Christopher Andrews' book on the KGB), Akhmerov handled Hiss. This had seemed all wrong, as Hiss was GRU. Looks like ALBERT took Hiss over for the KGB — possibly to improve their coverage of the UN Conference in San Francisco.[3]

[3] ALBERT, earlier covemame MER, appears in dozens of KGB messages, including messages of Spring 1945. However, none mention Hiss or describe circumstances or unidentified covernames that fit Hiss. However, very little 1945 traffic is readable.

**ALES greets President Truman at UN Conference in San Francisco.**

Covername POL' appears in other Venona traffic — as a KGB asset. Which seems to suggest that POL' serviced both the GRU and KGB. Two messages connect POL' and agent cipher systems:

• In New York KGB —> Moscow, No. 669, 11 May 1944, the Resident, covername MAJ reported as follows (all covernames remain unidentified):

**[6 groups unrecoverable]**

**ciphers intended for POL (GARD's man), ShTABIST and ZhIZEL. Is it necessary to keep them any longer? If not what do you recommend?**

• KGB NY —> Moscow, No. 1142, 10 August 1944 from the Resident MAJ to VIKTOR, quoted in full in Chapter XIV, is famous in the history of the Venona program, because it was one the first messages book-broken by Meredith Gardner. The message concerns the use of enciphered secret writing and says which publicly available books are to be used for cipher construction (e.g. the American novel, "My Sister Eileen"). The last paragraph mentions POL; covername TVEN = KGB officer Semen M. Semenov:

**6. In a simple cipher square TVEN trained**

**[34 groups unrecoverable]**

**...ZUL, POL which were destroyed and for ShTABIST which we are dispatching to you by the next regular post.**[4]

• In an earlier message (not about cipher matters) New York KGB to VIKTOR[5] in Moscow, Nos 775, 776, 777 of 29 May 1942 describes many agents connected to Latin America and/or Germany. The first paragraph of the message (Covername ARTHUR remains unidentified):

**ARTHUR's courier, Eduardo PECCHIO, who works on the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN's [i.e. Communist Party's] newpaper in CHILE, has arrived: he has delivered a code letter and written instructions for contacting [1 group unrecovered] persons. [c% Herewith the text] of the letter:**

The message then quotes a six paragraph letter that mentions nine Latin American personalities of interest to the KGB. A large number of unrecovered/unrecoverable groups follow paragraph 6 of the quoted letter. When the recovered text of the message resumes, we are at number 2., though it looks like the same type of information is being reported. This part of the message mentions one Latin American and several Spanish personalities. Here is the part relating to POL:

**[12 groups unrecovered}**

**Worked in [1 group unrecovered]. White-collar worker and manual worker. Had secondary education. I propose sending him to BARCELONA on 'D' work.**[6] **Apart from the other persons listed above, there are the following [2 groups unrecovered]: POL, MATROS,**

**[28 groups unrecovered]**

The ciphers discussed in the first two POL messages are book systems for clandestine communication/secret writing. Perhaps he trained the Hiss net and gave/received secret writing. If so, it would seem that the KGB would already have known about Hiss. CIA has suggested that POL' (which is the Russian for the given name Paul and for the word "field") was the American Noel Field. However, neither the FBI or NSA seems to have agreed. At least one other possibility: the covername POL of the March 1945 Hiss message was different from the covername POL of the earlier messages. In other words, the KGB might have re-assigned or re-used a covername.

The 30 March 1945 KGB message is our only clear Venona reference to Hiss. One New York GRU message contains the name Hiss as a true name. This GRU message, NY —> Moscow, 28 September 1943, (external no. 1579/internal no. 243) confuses the issue. It is an important message, as it identifies GRU agent covernames with true names — we discuss this message in the GRU chapter. The reference to Hiss is in the second paragraph, and does not seem to connect to the paragraph on covernames:

**2. The NEIGHBOR has reported that [1 group unrecovered] from the State Department by the name of HISS (**

**[121 groups unrecoverable]**

The message is signed MOLIERE, the covername for Pavel P. Mikhajlov, whose actual name may have been Menshikov or Meleshnivok, the GRU Resident (under cover as Vice–Consul) in New York. Here the

[4] ShTABIST = unidentified covername; ...ZUL = last part of an an unidentified covername, or entire covername.
[5] VIKTOR = Lt. General Fitin, head of the First Chief DirDirectorate (Foreign Intelligence) of the KGB.
[6] "D Work" = Sabotage.

reference to "the NEIGHBOR" would be to either the GRU–Naval or the KGB. As Hiss was a GRU agent this does not make a lot of sense unless: 1. He was unknown to GRU New York (and was being handled by the GRU in Washington or by a GRU illegal), or, 2. GRU New York is merely reporting it straight: the KGB (or GRU naval) has come across a person of interest in the State Department and have given his name to GRU New York.

Most perplexing, Hiss cannot otherwise be found in GRU Venona. None of the unidentified GRU covernames are rated as even "possibly Alger Hiss". The exploited GRU traffic from Washington is almost entirely routine Military Attache, and only one message contains Hiss–like information: a fragment of a GRU Washington —> Moscow message of 24 November 1943 that states that "Murphy telegraphed from Algiers: Massig [45 groups unrecoverable] position of Bogomolov on internal French questions." Murphy would be State Department special representative Robert D. Murphy; Massig is probably Rene Massigli of the Free French government and Bogomolov a Soviet Foreign Ministry representative in London. In other words this is a State Department/diplomatic type reporting (but we have indication that it came from Hiss). The few GRU Moscow —> Washington messages likewise are not relevant.

New York GRU was running agents and Hiss may be among the unidentified covernames in New York —> Moscow traffic. A few messages (in the Hiss context) look vaguely promising, and some of the identified covernames are of people Hiss probably knew.

We probably don't have enough exploitable GRU traffic to reach any conclusion; and it is quite possible that Hiss's handler used some other communication route, perhaps courier only.[7]

But I think the most likely explanations for the lack of GRU messages about Hiss are these:

1. The readable GRU messages are from 1943.

2. In 1943, Washington GRU used two key pad series. One contains the partly readable (and very boring) routine attache reporting. The second series is unreadable: I would guess this was the espionage reporting series.

3. Washington GRU traffic volume for 1943, 1944 and 1945 is very high — of 3500 GRU Washington messages sent in those three years, only about 85 were matched and just 51 were in good enough shape to translate (the routine attache messages).[8]

4. I believe Hiss appears in this mass of unreadable GRU Washington traffic. See Chapter XXI for a further discussion (including some information on clandestine transmitters and a probably GRU illegal).

[7] The Venona Collection, is almost without collateral/analytic papers concerning Hiss (the FBI items sent to AFSA/NSA are missing) except for summaries concerning him in Bob Lamphere's 1952 compilations of basic information on all the Venona spies identified til then. Interviews did not produce much information: Meredith Gardner recalled and described his ALES translation, but none of the US/UK Venona veterans (including Bob Lamphere) could answer questions about Hiss's apparent connection to both GRU and KGB.

[8] Hiss might also be in the NYC espionage traffic of 1944 and 1945: 600 messages for those two years, none readable.

*X. ALGER HISS. COVERNAME : ALES*

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# XI. THE ROSENBERGS AND THE ATOMIC BOMB SPY RINGS

## A. Introduction

In this chapter we will quote every Venona message known to mention Julius or Ethel Rosenberg, regardless of the message content. The latter an important point: at the trial it was made clear that Julius Rosenberg operated an espionage ring concerned with obtaining classified U.S. technology. This was reported to be quite separate from his and Ethel Rosenberg's role in atomic bomb espionage. As to the latter, the evidence at the trial showed that the Rosenbergs, using Ethel's sister-in-law Ruth, recruited Ruth's husband (Ethel's brother), David Greenglass, a technician working on the atomic bomb, and that they received classified information from him about the bomb amd made arrangements for him to pass secrets to other KGB assets. The Venona messages do not change any of this. Venona makes it clear that Julius Rosenberg was an important KGB agent and net controller involved in both atomic bomb and other espionage. The messages show that Rosenberg, who was not a physicist or otherwise conversant with nuclear energy, was anxious to pass Greenglass along to KGB technical experts.

Venona contains references to atomic bomb espionage by a number of persons from 1943 to 1945. The KGB coverterm for US atomic energy work, essentially the Manhattan Project, was ENORMOZ. In addition to the Rosenberg material, I will quote most Venona messages that mention ENORMOZ or that clearly refer to it or that mention agents who were involved in this KGB operation. Venona concerning the GRU's atomic bomb espionage is quite limited, in keeping with the overall nature of GRU Venona; that is we don't read much of their traffic.

The ENORMOZ Venona is extensive, important and of great historical value. It was through Venona, though this was concealed for many years, that Klaus Fuchs, the Rosenbergs and their agents were identified. This was probably the greatest contribution of Venona to U.S. counterintelligence operations.

Our account is largely documentary, a recitation of the Venona messages on the KGB's espionage against ENORMOZ. Obviously much KGB and GRU espionage concerning the atomic bomb has not been recovered in Venona. Our story is therefore not a complete one.

*XI. THE ROSENBERGS AND THE ATOMIC BOMB SPY RINGS*

B. The Rosenbergs and Greenglasses

**Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. He had KGB covernames ANTENNA and LIBERAL.**

Julius Rosenberg, born 12 May 1918, in New York City, graduated from CCNY in 1939 with a degree in electrical engineering. From 1940–March 1945 he was employed by the Army Signal Corps in New York City, Philadelphia and Newark. He worked briefly for Emerson Radio and then had his own businesses in New York City. The Army had information that he was a member of the Communist Party, thus his dismissal from the Signal Corps.

Ethel Rosenberg (nee: Greenglass) was born in New York City in 1915. Before her marriage she was employed in the private sector (textile industry mostly). She married Julius Rosenberg in 1939.

David Greenglass, Ethel's brother was born in 1922. He served in the Army from 1943 to 1946, and was stationed at Los Alamos from August 1944 to February 1946 where he worked on the atomic bomb project. He married Ruth Printz in 1942.

**David Greenglass, covernames ShMEL and KALIBR.**

Based on Venona leads, atomic bomb scientist Klaus Fuchs was interrogated in the UK in late 1949 and confessed by January 1950. His admissions, combined with extensive Venona information led to confessions from David Greenglass and Harry Gold. Greenglass implicated the Rosenbergs (who had by then been identified from Venona). Julius Rosenberg was questioned by the FBI on 16 June 1950 and arrested a month later, on 17 July. The FBI arrested Ethel Rosenberg on 11 August 1950. They were tried and convicted of conspiracy to commit espionage during wartime, and after a series of appeals, including to the Supreme Court, executed on the night of 19 June 1953.

As we described in Chapter IV, Meredith Gardner had found the covernames ANTENNA and LIBERAL in Venona by July 1947. His special reports 1, 6 and 11 of 1947–48 reported extensively on those covernames (and in #11, he discussed the appearance in the traffic of ANTENNA/LIBERAL's wife Ethel). In Chapter VII we discussed Kim Philby's access to ANTENNA/LIBERAL information (which might also have been known to Bill Weisband). For that reason it probably serves no purpose to try to pin down the exact date of first publication of each ANTENNA/LIBERAL message. They were among the earliest messages that Gardner quoted or abstracted in his series of Special Reports (all 11 of which had reached the FBI during 1948). But it may be historically useful to know which messages were available during 1952 and up to the time of the final appeal to the White House and the Supreme Court in June 1953.

General Eisenhower had said during his election campaign that he would not commute the sentences in the face of the evidence presented in court and the verdict of the jury and the judge's sentence. We may assume that President Eisenhower, his advisors, and perhaps candidate Eisenhower had been told about the information in Venona.

C. The Rosenbergs in Venona

KGB Covernames (for J. Rosenberg): ANTENNA, LIBERAL

The covername directories in the Venona Collection show that Julius Rosenberg has been found in 23 KGB Venona messages, dated 5 May 1944 to 17 January 1945.[1] As in all the cases presented in this volume, the statement about how often a covername or true name is found in Venona means just that — the covername(s) could have appeared in KGB traffic many more times, but in messages that have not been solved (or traffic never collected in the first place). Two of these messages have never been published, because the text that could be recovered contained only covernames. These two messages (only external message numbers given) are for covername LIBERAL:[2]

[redacted]

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

The 21 published Rosenberg messages are given in date order. If I intrude in the quoted text, I will use brackets [ ] and my initials, rlb, to distinguish from any translator's brackets that are included in the quote. The reader will notice that we arrive in the middle of the story and don't know, from Venona, where and how it began.[3] All messages are KGB, on the NY <—> Moscow lanes.

1. NY —> M, No. 628, 5 May 1944, signed MAJ (the NY KGB Resident, Stepan Apresyan). The text:

**Please carry out a check and sanction the recruitment of Alfred SARANT, a lead of ANTENNA's. He is 25 years old, a Greek, an American citizen and lives in TYRE [New York City, rlb]. He completed the engineering course at Cooper Union in 1940. He worked for two years in the Signal Corps Laboratory at Fort Monmouth. He was discharged for past union activity. He has been working for two years at Western Electric**

**[45 groups unrecoverable]**

**entry into the FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN [Party] [the Communist Party, rlb]. SARANT lives apart from his family. Answer without delay.**

Sarant was in fact recruited by Rosenberg.

2. NY —> M, No. 736, 22 May 1944, to VIKTOR, signature unrecovered. In the beginning of this message the New York sender (probably MAJ or ANTON) notes the difficult work facing the KhU, which was the so-called Economic Line, that worked scientific and technical targets including ENORMOZ. Covername ALEKSIJ was KGB officer Anatolij Antonovich Yakovlev, Rosenberg's handler and a key player in ENORMOZ espionage. The term Probationers means agents. Quoted in full:

**The work of the KhU connected with the receipt of bulky materials is attended by great risk particularly the secret [materials] which were coming in during 1943 and are coming in now. The danger has increased because of the periodic surveillance of the cadre workers and the unceasing surveillance of the PLANT [the Consulate, rlb] to which the materials are being brought for filming.**

[1] These are the three Black Books mentioned in the previous chapter. All Rosenberg covername appearance information is from the first volume which includes the NY <—> M KGB covername data. Rosenberg's covernames have not been found in any other lanes.

[2] [redacted]

[3] Julius Rosenberg may have been recruited in 1939 with the original covername LEVERAGE. Close study of the 1942 and 1943 translations might show Rosenberg as one of the unidentified covernames of those years.



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

**[18 groups unrecoverable]**

**to film at ALEKSEJ's apartment to which a portable camera had been brought earlier. It is intended [C% in the future] to practice such filming only [C% now and then]. What is your opinion? We consider it necessary to organize the filming of ANTENNA's probationers by ANTENNA himself. Again the question of a camera for ARSENIJ has been raised.[4] Exceptionally secret materials are conveyed in the original or in in manuscript which is more dangerous than the presence of a camera at ARSENIJ's. It is incomprehensible why one cannot do this in the course of the next half year (your no. 2031). We assume that it is connected with conservation and not the danger of ARSENIJ's disclosure**

**[34 groups unrecoverable]**

3. NY —> M, No. 845, 14 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. This message contains multiple internal messages. The first internal message, No. 451 is as follows:

**Your no. 2542 [not available, rlb]. ANTON's apartment is needed for photographing the material of ANTENNA's group.**

**Leonid Kvasnikov, covername ANTON, the KGB officer who ran atomic bomb espionage in the U.S.**

ANTON is the covername for KGB officer Leonid Romanovich Kvasnikov, known through Venona as head of technical collection (the KhU Line) for the New York Residency. He has claimed in an interview with Italian television that he headed the KGB's atomic bomb espionage in the U.S.

[4]ARSENIJ = Andrej Shevchenko, the KGB senior officer, under Trade cover, at the Bell Aviation factory in Buffalo, NY.

(b)(6)

4. NY —> M, No. 911, 27 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. This message is fragmented but the sense is apparent. Quoted in full:

**[5 groups unrecovered]**

**KhU line please sanction the processing of [redacted] [4 groups unrecovered] up to 1934 he attended the city engineering college. He took part in the work of the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists and Technicians (about three thousand people.**[5]

**[12 groups unrecovered]**

**press and [3 groups unrecovered] [d% is working in] the trade union Federation. According to a statement of ANTENNA C. knows well the engineer**

**[10 groups unrecovered]**

**highly qualified engineer. C. is married, has two children [7 groups unrecovered] must conduct through ECHO [3 groups unrecovered] [c%ANTENNA].**[6]

5. NY —> M, No. 976, 11 July 1944, to VIKTOR (signature not recovered). This message includes at least two internal message numbers. The recoverable parts of the second of these are quoted as follows:

**Please give instructions to the COUNTRYSIDE [Mexico, rlb] to buy two cameras and send them to TYRE by the first post. You allowed one camera for ANTENNA. The second is need for the work of the Office [the Residency, rlb]. The cameras find their way to the COUNTRYSIDE from Germany and cost 200 dollars. There are no cameras in TYRE. Inform us of your instructions.**

**With a view to reducing the time required for the receipt and handing back of RELE's materials we consider it would be a good thing to make it his job to photograph his own materials and bring to TYRE only undeveloped films. For this purpose we want to pass on to him STUKACH's old camera. The camera**

**[17 groups unrecoverable]**

I quoted the second paragraph to show that RELE (possibly Morton Sobell, who was tried with the Rosenbergs) and the ever-busy Jack Katz are mentioned in the same internal message as Rosenberg — however, in this message at least, the common factor is cameras, not Rosenberg.

6. NY —> Moscow, No. 1053, 26 July 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. Once again, Rosenberg is a talent spotter for the KGB, but (again) against targets unrelated to ENORMOZ. This message is quoted in entirety.

**In July ANTENNA was sent by the firm for ten days to work in CARTHAGE [Washington D.C., rlb] There he visited his school friend Max ELITCHER, who works in the Bureau of Standards as head of the fire control section for warships [which mount guns] of over five-inch calibre. He has access to extremely valuable material on guns.**

**Five years ago Max ELITCHER graduated from the Electro–Technical Department of the City College of New York. He has a Master of Science degree. Since finishing college he has been working at the Bureau of Standards. He is a FELLOW COUNTRYMAN**

[5] An organization with Communist Party ties.
[6] ECHO = Bernie Schuster, KGB agent who ran investigations for them and was in liaison with the Communist Party.

**[member of the C.P., rlb]. He entered the FELLOW COUNTRYMEN's organization after finishing his studies.**

**By ANTENNA he is characterized as a loyal, reliable, level-headed and able man. Married, his wife is a FELLOW COUNTRYWOMAN. She is a psychologist by profession, she works at the War Department.**

**Max ELITCHER is an excellent amateur photographer and has all the necessary equipment for taking photographs.**

**Please check ELITCHER and communicate your consent to his clearance.**

7. NY —> Moscow, No. 1251, 2 September, from MAJ to VIKTOR. This is one of the covername change messages, a second in this series followed in October. The message changes 22 covernames including Julius Rosenberg's:

**In accordance with our telegram no. 403 [an incorrect reference by NY KGB, rlb] we are advising you of the new cover names..... ANTENNA–LIBERAL ...**

The message changed several other covernames that are connected to ENORMOZ or Rosenberg: RELE became SERB (tentatively identified as Morton Sobell), SKAUT became METR (probably either Joel Barr or Al Sarant) and FOGEL became PERS. The latter remains unidentified but he or she was an important agent involved in atomic bomb espionage.

Julius Rosenberg is LIBERAL in all the following messages.

8. NY —> Moscow, No. 1314, 14 September 1944 from MAJ to VIKTOR. A short message quoted in entirety:

**Until recently GNOM [William Perl, rlb] was paid only the expenses connected with his coming to TYRE. Judging by an appraisal of the material received and the rest [1 group garbled] sent by us GNOM deserves remuneration for material no less valuable than that given by the rest of the members of LIBERAL's group who were given a bonus by you. Please agree to paying him 500 dollars.**

Perl, an electrical engineer, was employed by the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics from 1939–1950 (except for grad school, 1946–48), at Langley Field and at the Lewis Flight Propulsion Laboratory in Cleveland.[7]

9. NY —> Moscow, No. 1327, 15 September 1944, to VIKTOR, (sender not recovered). This message concerns the reporting of KGB officer Andrej Shevchenko (covername: ARSENIJ), who was legally accredited to the Bell Aircraft Corporation in Buffalo. The message reports on production of the P–47 fighter and development of the U.S. version of the V–1, sometimes called a robot bomb. Here Rosenberg seems to be providing some supplementary information and only one paragraph of the message is quoted:

**LIBERAL confirms that the output of robots has begun and reports that robot launchers will apparently be mounted on aircraft carriers for action against Japan.**

10. New York —> Moscow, No. 1340, 21 September 1944. In this message both Julius and Ethel Rosenberg enter the ENORMOZ espionage picture. Quoted in full:

[7] The NACA was involved with all military aircraft of the 1940s, including the development of jet planes. It handled very sensitive defense information.

**Lately the development of new people [D% has been in progress]. LIBERAL recommended the wife of his wife's brother, Ruth GREENGLASS, with a safe flat in view. She is 21 years old, an American citizen, a GYMNAST [member of the Young Communist League, rlb] since 1942. She lives on Stanton Street. LIBERAL and his wife recommend her as an intelligent and clever girl.**

**[15 groups unrecoverable]**

**[C% Ruth] learned that her husband was called up by the army but he was not sent to the front. He is a mechanical engineer and is now working at the ENORMOZ plant at SANTA FE, New Mexico.**

**[45 groups unrecoverable]**

**detain VOLOK [redacted] rlb] who is working in a plant on ENORMOZ. He is a FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN [C.P. member, rlb]. Yesterday he learned that they had dismissed him from his work. His active work in progressive organizations in the past was the cause of his dismissal.**

**In the FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN line LIBERAL is in touch with CHESTER.[8] They meet once a month for the payment of dues. CHESTER is interested in whether we are satisfied with the collaboration and whether there are not any misunderstandings. He does not inquire about specific items of work. In as much as CHESTER knows about the role of LIBERAL's group we beg consent to ask C. through LIBERAL about leads among people who are working on ENORMOZ and in other technical fields.**

**Your no. 4256 On making further enquiries and checking on LARIN we received from the FELOWCOUNTRYMEN through ECHO a character sketch which says that they do not entirely vouch for him. They base this statement on the fact that in the Federation LARIN does not carry out all the orders received from the leadership. He is stubborn and self willed. On the strength of this we have decided to refrain from approaching LARIN and intend to find another candidate in FAECT.[9]**

11. NY —> Moscow, No. 1491, 22 October 1944 from ANTON to VIKTOR. ANTON was the covername for Leonid KVASNIKOV, head of KGB technical targets collection, including ENORMOZ. This message has large gaps and we cannot tell if all of it concerns Rosenberg. Once again we see Rosenberg as a talent spotter and net controller. The entire translation is quoted:

**Inquiring**

**[36 groups unrecovered]**

**[34 groups unrecoverable]**

**was explained that he, as a specialist, received from the draft board an enquiry about where he is working and on what means he lives**

(b)(6)

**[60 groups unrecoverable]**

[8] CHESTER was the Communist Party name for Bernie Schuster —his street name. In Venona he appears under that name and under his Venona covername ECHO. In this message he appears under both names, though in separate internal numbers.

[9] CIA suggested to NSA and the FBI that the LARIN matter probably related to atomic bomb espionage. LARIN may be [redacted] see message no. 911 quoted above. FAECT = the initials for the Communist affiliated union mentioned in no. 911.

**..." In view of poor health**

**[24 groups unrecovered]**

**LIBERAL. He worked [D% there] 5 months in 1942. Contact was discontinued because of**

**[36 groups unrecoverable]**

**FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN. He was a volunteer in Spain. He lives in the western part of New York State, for the past three years he has not carried on active political work. LIBERAL has known him since childhood., during the last 10 years he has known him in political life. He characterizes him and his wife as devoted and reliable people. The wife by profession is a dressmaker and can open a shop in the city for cover. Let us know whether you consider LINZA more suitable to go to YaKOV. A reply for communicating to LIBERAL is necessary before 23 October. At the meeting with LIBERAL LINZA expressed readiness to renew contact with us.**

Covername LINZA (LENS) was Michael Sidorovich, who, with his wife Ann, became an important part of the Rosenberg net. Covername YaKOV, formerly covername GNOM, was William Perl. Note the close control by Moscow Center – New York KGB seeks approval for a local operational decision.

12. NY —> Moscow, No. 1600, 14 November 1944, from ANTON to VIKTOR. This short message very clearly links Julius Rosenberg with atomic bomb espionage. The message is packed with covernames, which are identified as follows:

HUGHES: probably Joel Barr or Al Sarant.

METR; probably Joel Barr or Al Sarant

OSA (WASP): Ruth Greenglass

ShMEL (BUMBLEBEE)/KALIBR: David Greenglass

Camp 2: Los Alamos, New Mexico

The message is quoted as follows:

**LIBERAL has safely carried through the contracting of HUGHES. HUGHES is a good pal of METR's. We propose to pair them off and get them to photograph their own materials having [been] given a camera for this purpose. HUGHES is a good photographer, has a large darkroom and all the equipment but he does not have a Leica. LIBERAL will receive the films from METR for passing on. Direction of the probationers will be continued through LIBERAL, this will ease the load on him. Details about the contracting are in letter no. 8.**

**OSA has agreed to cooperate with us in drawing in ShMEL (henceforth KALIBR — see your no 5258) with a view to ENORMOZ. On Summons from KALIBR she is leaving on 22 November for the Camp 2 area. KALIBR will have a week's leave. Before OSA's departure LIBERAL will carry out two briefing meetings.**

13. NY —> Moscow, No. 1609, 17 November 1944, from ANTON to VIKTOR. A short message, entirely recovered and quoted below

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36



**In connection with the plans for the photographing of material by LIBERAL and then by LINZA, a shortage of cassettes is making itself felt. We cannot get them without a priority. Please order 100 cassettes for a Leica camera through the COUNTRYSIDE [Mexico, rlb] and send them to us without delay.**

14. NY —> Moscow, No. 1657, 27 November 1944, from ANTON to VIKTOR. This message contains two internal numbers, the second of no relevance to this chapter. The first part of the message (internal No. 922), however, concerns Ethel Rosenberg and is quoted in full:

**KGB NY to Moscow Center, 27 Nov 1944: "Information on LIBERAL's wife. Surname that of her husband, first name Ethel . . .".**

**Your no. 5356 [not available]. Information on LIBERAL's wife. Surname that of her husband, first name ETHEL, 29 years old. Married five years. Finished secondary school. A FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN [C.P. member, rlb] since 1938. Sufficiently well developed politically. Knows her husband's work and the role of METR and NIL. In view of delicate health does not work. Is characterized positively as a devoted person.**

Covername NIL remains unidentified; METR is either Joel Barr or Al Sarant. As discussed in Chapter IV., Meredith Gardner analyzed this message in 1948, drawing attention to possible meanings, in KGB tradecraft context, of the word "work". Did it mean clandestine work for the KGB or the conventional meaning? Ethel Rosenberg was not working outside the home. Translation 10., above, shows that she had a role in the recruitment of the Greenglasses.

15. NY —> Moscow, No. 1715, 5 December 1944, ANTON to VIKTOR. This consists of three fully recovered internal messages, the first two signed by ANTON, the third by MAJ. The first, internal No. 943 is quoted as follows:

**Expedite consent to the joint filming of their materials by both METR and HUGHES (see our letter no. 8). LIBERAL has on hand eight people plus the filming of materials. The state of LIBERAL's health is nothing splendid. We are afraid of putting LIBERAL out of action with overwork.**

16. NY —> Moscow, No. 1749, 1750, 13 December 1944, to VIKTOR, signature unrecoverable. This message was only partially solved. It clearly involves atomic bomb espionage, but so many groups are unrecoverable that the full meaning is uncertain. This is a very important message, filled with both familiar and new covernames. Covernames include:

ARNO: Harry Gold

PERS: Unidentified, formerly known as FOGEL/VOGEL

Camp–1: an unidentified atomic energy site

MLAD (YOUNG): Theodore Alvin Hall

OSA: Ruth Greenglass

KALIBR: David Greenglass

SVET: KGB officer Aleksandr Andreevich Raev

KALISTRAT: KGB officer Aleksandr Semenovich Fomin

The message:

**Your Nos. 5740 and 5797 [both unavailable].**

**We consider it risky to concentrate all the contacts relating to ENORMOZ on ARNO alone. This is good in that it limits the circles of [2 groups unrecovered] persons but it is dangerous to disrupt [1 group unrecovered] work on ENORMOZ.**

**[45 groups unrecoverable]**

**PERS. [7 groups unrecovered] Camp–1. Our proposal**

**[24 groups unrecovered]**

**not to give [D% any more] on ENORMOZ.**

**2. To leave OSA and KALIBR in contact with LIBERAL until [3 groups unrecovered] work.**

**3. "MLAD" [51 groups unrecoverable]**

**PART II Further [14 groups unrecovered].**

**Both are FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN. Both are helping us and both meet LIBERAL and ARNO. [3 groups unrecovered]. HUGHES handed over 17 authentic drawings relating to the APQ–7 [a classified high resolution airborne radar, rlb] (postal despatch No. 9). He can be trusted. The transfer of HUGHES alone to SVET is no way out of the situation. It will be necessary to put SVET in touch with KALISTRAT in order to bring material for photography into the PLANT [the Residency, rlb]. I cannot carry material in and out of the PLANT late in the evening. I insist on bringing HUGHES and METR together, putting the latter in touch with KALISTRAT or SVET and separating both from LIBERAL.**

**In TYRE [14 groups unrecoverable]**
**round the clock. There are no major contradictions between letters 5 and 7 about LIBERAL They compliment each other. LIBERAL's shortcomings do not mean that he will be completely useless for photography. He is gradually getting used to photography.**

17. NY —> Moscow, No. 1773, 16 December 1944, From ANTON to VIKTOR. This message puts Julius Rosenberg squarely in the middle of atomic bomb espionage, but rather reluctantly because of his lack of knowledge of the subject matter:

**OSA has returned from a trip to see KALIBR. KALIBR expressed his readiness to help in throwing light on the work being carried out at Camp–2 and stated that he had already given thought to this question earlier. KALIBR said that the authorities of the Camp were openly taking all precautionary measures to prevent information about ENORMOZ falling into Russian hands. This is causing serious discontent among the progressive [B% workers].**

**[17 groups unrecoverable]**

**the middle of January KALIBR will be in TYRE. LIBERAL referring to his ignorance of the problem, expresses the wish that our man should meet KALIBR and interrogate him personally. He asserts that KALIBR would be very glad of such a meeting. Do you consider such a meeting advisable? If not, I shall be obliged to draw up a questionnaire and pass it to LIBERAL. Report whether you have any questions of priority interest to us.**

**KALIBR also reports: OPPENHEIMER from California and KISTIAKOWSKI (MLAD's report mentioned the latter) are at present working at the Camp. The latter is doing research on the thermodynamic process. Advise whether you have any information of these two professors.**[10]

18. NY —> Moscow, No. 1797, 20 December 1944, to VIKTOR, signature not recovered. The first paragraph concerns Harry Gold's cover and his interest in setting up a laboratory through which, "he envisages concluding agreements with firms". He asked KGB NY for $2000 to help him get started. A separate internal number (978) concerns Rosenberg:

**LINZA and his wife have left for YaKOV's town. At the end of December LIBERAL will go there and will put LINZA in touch with YaKOV. Before making the move, LINZA and his wife visited the town and took an apartment, the address of which we reported in letter No. 9. LINZA sold his house and spent part of the money on the move. We gave him a once for all payment of 500: I consider that**

**[24 groups unrecoverable]**

In other words, Michael and Ann Sidorovich have moved to Cleveland on KGB business and Rosenberg will go there to put them in touch with William Perl who was working there at the Lewis Flight Propulsion Laboratory. Presumably the couple would process/courier material lifted by Perl.

19. NY —> Moscow, No. 28, 8 January 1945, from ANTON to VIKTOR. Some 169 groups of this message are unrecovered or unrecoverable. The first paragraph has some solid text about KALIBR (David Greenglass); the rest of the message including the direct mention of LIBERAL is poorly recovered:

[10] J. Robert Oppenheimer, Director of the Los Alamos Laboratory and George Kistiakowsky, chief of the explosives division of the Lab.

**KALIBR has arrived in TYRE on leave. He has confirmed his agreement to help us. In addition to the information passed to us through OSA [his wife, Ruth Greenglass, rlb] he has given us a hand-written plan of the lay-out of Camp–2 and facts known to him about the work and the personnel. The basic task of the camp is to make the mechanism which is to serve as the detonator. Experimental work is being carried out on the construction of a tube of this kind and experiments are being tried with explosive**

**[13 groups unrecoverable]**

**is still**

**[17 groups unrecovered]**

**gave you for**

**[91 groups unrecovered]**

**TYRE in six months time**

**[32 groups unrecoverable]**

**LIBERAL to OSA**

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

**Telegraph your opinion,**

20. Moscow Center —> NY, No. 200, 6 March 1945, from VIKTOR. This is the earliest message from Moscow in which Rosenberg has been found and the second reference to Rosenberg being paid for his work:

**[66 groups unrecovered]**

**decision was made about awarding the sources as a bonus the following sums: to LIBERAL 1000 dollars, NIL**

**[58 groups unrecoverable]**

**either the purchase of valuable gifts for the Probationers or payment to them of money on the basis of well thought out cover stories.**

**[28 groups unrecovered]**

21. Moscow Center —> NY, No. 325, 5 April 1945, from VIKTOR to ANTON. This is a very interesting but poorly recovered message, actually at least two internal numbers, 2098 and 2101, both making reference to Julius Rosenberg. It is possible (in 2098) that Moscow is telling case officer Kvasnikov (ANTON) some information about Rosenberg and the American Communist Party; or more likely that Rosenberg is or could be the source of information about someone else because of his (Rosenberg's) connection to the Party:

**Reference No. 290**

**If [6 groups unrecovered] LIBERAL's membership of the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN's ASSOCIATION [5 groups unrecovered] and precise information about him through the leadership of the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN does not exist. The supposition as to the presence in [4 groups unrecovered] D.B. was reported by LIBERAL himself to the leadership of the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN.**

**[Internal No. 2098]**

The meaning of the "D.B." is unknown. In the second internal message of No. 325, SLAVA appears, a covername not previously seen in connection with Julius Rosenberg:

> **In principle we do not object to bringing in SLAVA to participate with us and [5 groups unrecovered] NIL's material. As a final solution of the question we propose:**
>
> **1. To entrust to LIBERAL or NIL,**
>
> **[10 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **SLAVA, having received his consent to work with us. To mention**
>
> **[56 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **material. It will be possible to decide the question of using him to copy NIL's material.**
>
> **[Internal] No. 2101**

Covername NIL remains unidentified. SLAVA is probably Ilya Elliot Wolston, a KGB asset, who had been on military duty in Alaska until early 1945.[11]

Of items 1 thru 19 above, that is messages from New York to Moscow, it would appear that the contents were known, and the covername ANTENNA or LIBERAL found in all except possibly 4 and 19, before the Rosenbergs' final appeal. Even those two messages were sufficiently recovered (especially 19) to make a connection to Rosenberg. Most of these messages had been published by the end of 1952, and much of the information had been known since 1947/48 — which is how the atomic bomb espionage nets were uncovered. The messages from Moscow were not translated until later.

The belief, therefore, that the substantial trial evidence against the Rosenbergs was backed by confirmatory information from Venona, information available to the government at the time of the trial/appeals, is correct. However, it would also be correct to say that while the Venona evidence, like the trial evidence against Julius Rosenberg is overwhelming, the best evidence against Ethel Rosenberg is from the courtroom testimony, not Venona.

D. Other Atomic Bomb Spies in Venona

In the 21 Rosenberg messages the names of a number of other atomic bomb spies appear: the Greenglasses, Harry Gold, Theodore Alvin Hall, unidentified covername PERS/FOGEL (VOGEL). The purpose of this section is to list, chronologically, the other obvious atomic bomb espionage messages, without grouping the messages spy-by-spy. The following cannot be considered an all-inclusive accounting of possible references to atomic bomb espionage in Venona. But this chapter covers the great majority of Venona references.

However, some important information cannot be found in Venona. For example, it seems likely that the KGB had an effort going against the U.S. atomic energy research from at least 1942, but few messages from that year are exploitable. We have only one West Coast KGB and one GRU message at all concerning Russian espionage against the atomic bomb project. As I mentioned earlier, West Coast KGB personalities Steve Nelson and Haakon Chevalier have not been found in Venona, nor have Morris and Lona Cohen been identified in the traffic. Mrs. Cohen was an important courier who picked up material from KGB agents in Santa Fe/Albuquerque. I think that unidentified covernames ERIE, or IRI and later known as ERNEST, and GURON/HURON are good candidates for the Cohens.

[11] SLAVA was a nephew of KGB man Jack Soble. Covername FROST, Boris Morros, knew Soble and his nephew SLAVA, so I wonder if Morros also knew Rosenberg. FROST/Morros is discussed in Chapter XIX.

The messages (all KGB except as noted):

1. NY —> Moscow, No. 961, 21 June 1943 (no signature or addressee recovered). This is the earliest Venona message that I have found concerning atomic bomb espionage. Quoted in full:

> **On 14 June a meeting took place with KVANT in CARTHAGE [Washington, D.C., rlb]. By arrangement he was received by DED's deputy who after a short conversation handed him over to EGOR in whose presence KVANT**
>
> **[20 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **with TVEN KANT declared that he is convinced of the value of the materials and therefore expects from us a similar recompense for his labor — in the form of a financial reward**
>
> **[18 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **his attitude on this question. He was told that [B% the question]**
>
> **[38 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **[KVAN]T was given 300 dollars.**

This message becomes clearer with the next message. Not until 1979 would KVANT (which means QUANTUM) be identified as the long since defected Bruno Pontecorvo, an Italian born physicist who was associated with ENORMOZ research in Canada and the U.S. during the war. Pontecorvo was known to have been in the United States, probably in Washington, on 14 June 1943.[12] DED is Ambassador Litvinov and his deputy is Andrei Gromyko; EGOR an unidentified KGB officer and TVEN (TWAIN), Semen Markovich Semenov, KGB, under AMTORG cover.

2. NY —> Moscow, Nos. 972, 979, 983, 22–23 June 1943, no address or signature recovered. This very long 3-part message contains over 300 unrecovered or unrecoverable groups. A large part of the message is taken up with a formula, the only one seen in Venona. It suggests that the KGB in Washington was very excited by this information and resorted to reporting by message rather than document photography and courier (which is how most bulky or complicated intelligence went out). We quote a few parts of this message – note that the KGB is transmitting a document they have translated from English. Only a few extracts follow; full text is reproduced in the appendices of some sets of this history:

> **Information from KVANT. Translated from the English.**
>
> **The basic idea for a method of separation of ENORMOZ consists in repeated [1 group unrecovered] distillation by sublimation—and rapid condensation of vapours.**
>
> **[and etc., rlb]**
>
> **PART III Let a = $\frac{x}{1-x}$**
>
> **p= quantity of light molecules / total quantity of molecules in**
>
> **[and etc.]**

(b)(7)(D)
OGA

FBI

[12] Alec Hobart, GCHQ, told me that he made the recovery of CARTHAGE (Washington) and then re-translated this message. The [redacted] FBI then made the identification of Pontecorvo. Earlier translations did not include CARTHAGE — the key to identifying Pontecorvo. Mr. Hobart's information was particularly welcome, as the NSA Venona Collection's translations of this message (the last reissue, 10 Oct 1979) still carry KVANT as an unidentified covername. This important example suggests that other unidentified covernames may have been tentatively identified during the final push of 1978–80 but the identifications not officially recorded.

(b)(6)

*XI. THE ROSENBERGS AND THE ATOMIC BOMB SPY RINGS*

3. GRU NY —> GRU Moscow, No. 1328, 12 August 1943. From MOLIERE to The Director. This message is the only GRU Venona reference to atomic energy. The first paragraph concerns the election of a GRU agent, Fred Rose, to the Canadian Parliament. The second paragraph is as follows:

> **In SACRAMENTO, California, in Radiation Laboratories, large-scale experimental work is being conducted for the War Department. Working there is a progressive professor [redacted] whom one can approach through the KORPORANT [Communist Party member, rlb] PINSKY — one of the directors**
>
> **[24 groups unrecoverable]**

[redacted] Paul George Pinsky, born in Manchuria in 1912 to Russian parents, arrived in the U.S. in 1931 and became a citizen in 1937. From 1942–1950 he was research director of the CIO in California. He was observed in the presence of KGB veteran Steve Nelson who told CPUSA leader (and KGB agent) Earl Browder that Pinsky was, "a graduate of our school".

4. NY —> Moscow, No. 1405, 27 August 1943, address and signature not recovered. This poorly recovered message concerns several subjects but it is quoted in full:[13]

> **[75 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **[1 group unrecovered] and the exchange [3 groups unrecovered] on the SHORE. If nothing comes of this then M. [9 groups unrecovered] to SIDON.[14]**
>
> **About his affairs and**
>
> **[43 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **for SOLIDNYJ[15] and No. 534 of 22 June reported information from KVANT on ENORMOZ.**

5. NY —> Moscow, No. 195, 9 Feb 1944, Personal to VIKTOR from ANTON. This important message describes the first meeting of KGB courier Gold and Klaus Fuchs. For that reason it is quoted in entirety. GUS (GOOSE) is Harry Gold and Klaus Fuchs is REST.

> **In reply to No. 302 [not available]**

[13] KVANT is not afterwards found in Venona. He was most often in Canada; Ottawa <—> Moscow KGB and GRU is unreadable.
[14] SHORE = North Africa; SIDON = London; M. = unidentified.
[15] SOLIDNYJ (SOLID) = u/i, probably connected to a-bomb espionage.

◀ Klaus Fuchs, KGB covernames REST and CHARLES.

KGB courier Harry Gold, covernames GUS and ARNO. ▶

**On 5th February a meeting took place between GUS and REST. Beforehand GUS was given a detailed briefing by us. REST greeted him pleasantly but was rather cautious at first, [1 group unrecovered] the discussion GUS satisfied himself that REST was aware of whom he was working with. R. arrived in the COUNTRY in September as a member of the ISLAND mission on ENORMOZ. According to him the work on ENORMOZ in the COUNTRY is being carried out under the direct control of the COUNTRY's army represented by General SOMERVILL and STIMSON: at the head of the group of ISLANDERS is a Labor member of Parliament, Ben SMITH.**

**The whole operation amounts to the working out of the process for the separation of isotopes of ENORMOZ. The work is proceeding in two directions: the electron method developed by LAWRENCE**

**[71 groups unrecoverable]**

**separation of isotopes by the combined method, using the diffusion method for preliminary and the electron method for final separation. The work**

**[46 groups unrecovered]**

**18th February, we shall report the results.**

*XI. THE ROSENBERGS AND THE ATOMIC BOMB SPY RINGS*

The references to US–UK leaders: Lt Gen Brehon Somervell headed the Army Service Forces. General Groves and the Manhattan Project were under him; Henry L. Stimson was Secretary of War; Ben Smith the UK special representative in Washington for supply matters. The COUNTRY is USA; ISLAND is the UK.

Returning for a moment to the history of the Venona program — an early report to GCHQ by Howse, P.H. 60 of 13 August 1949 called attention to a batch of REST, later called CHARLES and GUS/GOOSE later called ARNO, messages relating to scientific research, including atomic energy, and that at least one of the spies appeared to be British.

6. NY —> Moscow, No 212, ll Feb 1944, Personal for VIKTOR from unrecoverable signatory (probably ANTON) quoted as follows:

**Herewith a report from FOGEL on the work of ENORMOZ**

**[163 groups unrecovered]**

**80[0] pounds for the neutralization of weak**

**[305 groups unrecoverable]**

Covername FOGEL/FOGEL, also known as covername PERS, has never been identified.

7. NY —> Moscow, No. 619, 4 May 1944, signed by MAJ. This message is a bit confusing; OLSEN and RAMSAY are truenames, the latter may have been Norman Foster Ramsey a senior atomic scientist at Los Alamos. ECHO is KGB agent Bernie Schuster. Quoted in full:

**The object of ECHO's trip is as follows:**

**OLSEN is district leader of the [Communist Party, rlb] in Chicago. OLSEN's wife, who has been meeting RAMSAY, is also an active FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN and met RAMSAY on instructions of the organization. At our suggestion ECHO can get a letter from OLSEN with which one or other of our people will meet RAMSAY and thereafter will be able to strike up an acquaintance. Advise your [consent] to these [measures].**

8. NY —> Moscow, No. 645, 8 May 1944, from MAJ. In this short message, NY reports that Klaus Fuchs (REST) had advised them of difficulties between the US and UK parties regarding the atomic bomb research:

**REST advises that the work of the Commission of the ISLANDERS in the COUNTRY is *not* meeting with success in view of the unwillingness of workers of the country to share secrets with the ISLANDERS.**

**It will be proposed to REST that he should either return to the ISLAND or work at the special laboratory-camp for [b% study].**

**[35 groups unrecoverable]**

**the work of REST from the two indicated.**

9. NY —> Moscow, No. 850, 15 June 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. Klaus Fuchs reports more of the same — a falling out between the two countries' ENORMOZ parties. FUCHS reports that he may have to leave the U.S. and return to the UK. The message also specifies some information that Fuchs turned over to the KGB:

**[1 group unrecovered] received from REST the third part of report MSN – 12 Efferent Flucuation in a Stream**

**[37 groups unrecoverable]**

**Diffusion method — work on his speciality. R. [REST; Fuchs,rlb] expressed doubt about the possibility of remaining in the COUNTRY without arousing suspicion. According to what R. says, the ISLANDERS and TOWNSMEN have finally fallen out as a result of the delay in research work on diffusion. The TOWNSMEN have told the representative of the ISLAND that construction of a plant in the ISLAND 'would be in direct contradiction to the spirit of the agreement on ENORMOZ signed together with the Atlantic Charter.' At present the ISLAND's director in CARTHAGE is ascertaining the details of the transfer of work to the ISLAND. R. assumes that he will have to leave in a month or six weeks.**

10. NY —> Moscow, No. 854, 16 June 1944, to VIKTOR from MAJ. A multiple subject message with a short paragraph of interest to this chapter:

**By the same post[16] were dispatched two secret plans of the layout of the ENORMOZ plant received from FOGEL.**

Covername FOGEL (VOGEL), aka: PERS has not been identified.

11. NY —> Moscow, No. 912, 27 June 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. This message concerns the re-arrangement of agent handlers in the KhU Line which handled atomic bomb and other technology targets. Covernames SMART, ERIE and HURON have not been identified thought the latter two may be Lona and Morris Cohen. SMART might be a KGB officer or Soviet cooptee. GUS = Harry Gold. Quoted in full:

**Your no. 2708**

**[19 groups unrecovered]**

**and canalisation. Connected with us in the KhU line [1 group unrecovered] is SMART. We propose to transfer ERIE and HURON to him. We request your sanction. To transfer these probationers to GUS [Harry Gold, rlb] [6 groups unrecovered] GUS. [14 groups unrecovered] receive constant [1 group unidentified]. He is wondering why the monthly payment of 100 dollars was discontinued**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**with him.**

13. NY —> Moscow, No. 1049, 25 July 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. In one of the internal messages we have this concerning Klaus Fuchs:

[16] In the first paragraph we learn that secret information about U.S. aircraft had been dispatched by "post No. 4"; the ENORMOZ plans went out in that same courier shipment.



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

**After almost half a year of contact established with REST [he] has demonstrated the value of his work for us. We consider it necessary to pay him for this half year the due reward of 500 dollars. Telegraph consent.**

14. NY —> Moscow, No. 1233, 29 August 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. This is an involved message about missed meetings with Klaus Fuchs. REST = Fuchs; ALEKSEJ = KGB officer Yakovlev[17]; GUS = Harry Gold:

**In July when it became known that REST might be leaving for the ISLAND, instructions were given to ALEKSEJ, and by the latter to GUS, to arrange a password for a meeting with REST in case he was leaving. On 5 August REST did not appear at the meeting and GUS missed the next meeting, pleading pressure of work. R. was not at the following control meeting, pleading pressure of work. When he checked on R.'s apartment, GUS was informed that R. had left for the ISLAND. In order to re-check, I sent G. to R.'s sister[18]; she and her husband the departure up to 20 September[19]**

**[67 groups unrecoverable]**

**should check his arrival. I did not have time to hand over to R. the 500 dollars authorized by you.**

15. NY —> Moscow, No. 1403, 5 October 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR lists 27 covername changes, some of interest to this chapter including: GUS to ARNO (Harry Gold); HURON to ERNEST; REST to CHARLES; ERIE to [unrecovered, but probably ZhORZh or LIDER]; SOLIDNYJ to RODSTVENNIK and says there will be "continuation later".

16. NY —> Moscow, No. 1549, 3 November 1944, to VIKTOR, signature not recovered. A short partially recovered message that might be connected to the Rosenbergs as the covernames found are for Ruth [OSA] and David Greenglass [BUMBLEBEE/ShMEL]:

**I do not understand your number 5029. I will send details by post.**

**Your numbers 4590 and 3984. Approaches to OSA and BUMBLEBEE[20]**

17. NY —> Moscow, No. 1585, 12 November 1944, to VIKTOR. The message is quoted in full:

**BEK [a KGB officer] visited Theodore HALL, 19 years old, the son of a furrier. He is a graduate of Harvard University. As a talented physicist he was taken for government work. He was a [member of the Young Communist League] and conducted work in the Steel Founders Union. According to BEK's account HALL has an exceptionally keen mind and a broad outlook, and is politically developed. At the present time H. is in charge of a group at "CAMP-2" [Santa Fe]. H. handed over to BEK a report about the CAMP and named key personnel employed on ENORMOZ. He decided to do this on advice of his colleague Saville SAX, a GYMNAST [member of the Young Communist League, rlb] living in TYRE.[21] SAX's mother is a FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN [C.P. member] and works for RUSSIAN WAR RELIEF. With the aim of hastening a meeting with a competent**

[17] Who handled the Rosenbergs.
[18] Kristel Fuchs Heineman
[19] The Venona translator noted that this would probably make sense if the main verb, located in the following 67 groups, had been recovered.
[20] The Venona translator noted that the sense here could have been negative, e.g.: "there have been no approaches".
[21] TYRE = NYM/C

**person, H. on the following day sent a copy of the report by S. to the PLANT. ALEKSEJ [KGB officer Yakovlev, rlb] received S. H. had to leave for CAMP–2 in two days time. ALEKSEJ [Yakovlev of the KGB] was compelled to make a decision quickly. Jointly with MAJ he gave BEK consent to feel out H., to assure him that everything was in order and to arrange liaison with him. BEK met S. [1 group garbled] our automobile. We consider it expedient to maintain liaison with H. [1 group unidentified] through S. and not bring in anybody else. MAJ has no objection to this. We shall send the details by post.**

The signatory to this message must have been ANTON. BEK is Sergej Nikolaevich Kurnakov.

18. NY —> Moscow, No. 1699, 2 December 1944, signed by ANTON. This is the famous atomic scientist message that KGB agent Bill Weisband learned about while watching Meredith Gardner bookbreak it in December 1946 — it is one of the earliest translations. The message contains a list of scientists working on ENORMOZ, probably given to Sax by Hall, and it concludes with some rather confusing information about, apparently, Sax's difficulties in getting the material to the KGB. NAPOLI = Nicholai Nipola, President and Manager of ARTKINO which produced and distributed Russian in the Western Hemisphere. RULEVOJ = Earl Browder, KGB agent and chairman of the American Communist Party. Quoted in full:

**Conclusion of Telegram [Internal] No. 940.**[22]

**Enumerates the following scientists who are working on the problem — Hans BETHE,, Niels BOHR, Enrico FERMI, John NEWMAN, Bruno ROSSI, George KISTIAKOVSKI, Emilio SEGRE, G.I. TAYLOR, William PENNEY, Arthur COMPTON, Ernest LAWRENCE, Harold UREY, Hans STANARM, Edward TELLER, Percy BRIDGEMAN, Werner EISENBERG, STRASSENMAN**

**[7 groups unrecoverable]**

**our country addressed himself to NAPOLI and the latter, not wanting to listen to him, sent him to BEK as military commentator of the paper. On attempting to visit RULEVOJ he was not admitted to him by the latter's secretary.**[23]

19. NY —> Moscow, No. 94, 23 Jan 1945, to VIKTOR, signature unrecoverable. One of many examples of Bernie Schuster (in this message he is covername ECHO) running investigative leads for the KGB.[24] The message concerns Theodore A. Hall (MLAD) and Saville Sax (STAR):

**The checking of STAR and MLAD we entrusted to ECHO a month ago, the result of the check we have not yet had. We're checking STAR's mother also.**

**DICK is directly in touch with FLOKS's husband and not with FLOKS herself. The intention of sending the husband to see RAMSAY is explained by [c%the possibility] of avoiding a superfluous stage for transmitting instructions.**

**BEK [KGB officer Sergej Kurnakov] is extremely displeased over the handing over of STAR to ALEKSEJ [KGB officer Yakovlev]. He gives a favorable report of him.**

[22] Internal No. 940 represents an erroneous re-use of an internal number. We have a No. 940 which relates to something else but do not have this 940.

[23] I do not believe that Gardner's December 1949 translation contained the last part of the message. Presumably Weisband could have noted the message date/number, and some of the names on the list (because Meredith drew his attention to those names). The KGB then should have known (from Weisband) that the U.S. was breaking a message that described the work of some of their atomic bomb espionage assets.

[24] In the second internal message to NY —> M, no. 1715, 5 Dec 1944, we see Schuster as covername DICK running some other ENORMOZ leads:

**ALEKSEJ has met STAR twice but cannot yet give a final judgement. MLAD has been seen by no one except BEK. [C% On the 8th of January] MLAD sent a letter but never [C% made arrangements] for calling to a meeting. He has been called into the army and left to work in the camp. [that is the atomic bomb sites in New Mexico where MLAD served first as a civilian and then as an Army enlisted man, rlb]**

**STAR intends to renew his studies at Harvard University at the end of February.**

20. Moscow —> New York, no. 164, 20 Feb 1945, VIKTOR to ANTON. The first internal message discusses some personal covernames (ERIE and HURON). The second gives covernames for ENORMOZ locations:

**1. Your number 97. Leave the covername GURON unchanged, IRI amend to ERNEST.**[25]

**2. Report on the carrying out of instructions (our number 4748) of 12 October on [1 group unrecovered] KhU**[26] **[1 group unrecovered] [b% office and]**

**[17 groups unrecovered]**

**[75 groups unrecoverable]**

**GIDROSTROJ, [3 groups unrecovered] — OKUROV, ALBUQUERQUE — SERNOVODSK, KNOXVILLE — NOVOGORSK.**

21. Moscow —> New York, No. 259, 21 March 1945, VIKTOR to ANTON. This is an important message but some identifications remain unknown and two names are withheld. The Center begins by noting past instructions to NY to send covername HURON (GURON) to Chicago:

**J. Robert Oppenheimer—was he covername VEKSEL?**

[25] That is HURON and ERIE, who I believe are Lona and Morris Cohen.

[26] In an earlier message, Moscow Center had directed the New York KhU Line to operate as a sub or even independent Residency. Kvasnikov headed the KhU Line (technical targets including the atomic bomb) and he, instead of the Resident MAJ, signed certain types of messages.

**to re-establish contact with VEKSEL. Carry these out as soon as possible. HURON should also make use of his stay in CHICAGO to renew his acquaintance with G. [name withheld] who is known to you and who is taking part in the work on ENORMOZ.**

**2. [15 groups unrecovered]**

**the well-known physicist — B. [name withheld, rlb], an emigrant from Russia. According to available information B. is taking part in the work on ENORMOZ.**

**3. [4 groups unrecovered] 759 of 8 February 1945 [2 groups unrecovered] with RAMSAY;**

**4. By the next mail report the carrying out of the instructions in our No. 416 of 23 January 1945 concerning the collection through PETER[27]and the other agent network of information on the structure and activities of the Bureau of Standards.**

Note the reference to "the other agent network". Covername VEKSEL may be J. Robert Oppenheimer (discussed later in this section).

22. Moscow —> New York, No. 298, 31 March 1945, VIKTOR to ANTON. The Center gives an evaluation of the material that had been provided to KGB NY by agents Klaus Fuchs (CHARLES) and Theodore Alvin Hall (MLAD). Many groups are missing but the evaluation seems to be by courier package number, the first number being the month and the second a one-up number from the start of the year:

**We are sending an evaluation on ENORMOZ. Referenced are materials from CHARLES about the FUNICULAR:[28]**

**a) 5/46**

**[31 groups unrecovered]**

**gaskets**

**b) 5/60 — [6 groups unrecovered] — contains an interesting method of calculation, which will be used during the design.**

**c) 5/62 — technical data on the FUNICULAR and**

**[12 groups unrecovered]**

**d) 7/83, paragraph 1 — about the degree of separation of the membrane — offers substantial interest.**

**e) 7/84 paragraph 1 — about tests of the membrane and information about the layout of the plant — is of interest. What is needed is [7 groups unrecovered] plan of the plant.**

**f) 7/83 and 84 — on the theory of the [c% stability] of the FUNICULAR — together with CHARLES materials on this question received earlier they form a full and valuable piece of information.**

**2) MLAD's report about work [4 groups unrecovered]. [1 group unrecovered] great interest.**

23. NY —> Moscow, No. 799, 26 May 1945, to VIKTOR from ANTON. MLAD (Theodore Alvin Hall) had provided "A list of places where work on ENORMOZ is being carried out". The list included (the following is a summary):

[27] PETER = Thomas L. Black, a chemist.
[28]FUNICULAR = probably the gaseous diffusion plant K25 at Clinton, Tennessee.

- Hanford, Washington. Production of "49" (the symbol used by the U.S. for plutonium).
- Berkeley, California. Production of "25" (the symbol used by the U.S. for uranium). MLAD reported that Ernest Lawrence (true name given) directed this effort.
- "NOVOSTROJ", the administrative center for ENORMOZ. Here the reference may be to Oak Ridge, Tennessee.
- Argonne Laboratories in Chicago. "At present work there has almost ceased."
- "The RESERVATION", which MLAD described as the location of, "the main practical research work on ENORMOZ. Director [is] VEKSEL." RESERVATION may mean Los Alamos in which case VEKSEL would seem to be J. Robert Oppenheimer.
- "CAMP [2 groups unrecovered] base in the area of CARLSBAD, state of NEW MEXICO, the place for the practical testing of the ENORMOZ work."
- Montreal, Canada — for theoretical research.

This message closed with the following two paragraphs:

> **A brief description of the four methods of production of 25 [uranium] — the diffusion, thermal diffusion, electromagnetic and spectrographic methods.**
>
> **The material has not been fully worked over. We shall let you know the contents of the rest later.**[29]

24. Moscow —> NY, No. 709, 5 July 1945, from VIKTOR. In this message the Center expressed great concern and dissatisfaction with the security of atomic bomb espionage and established new reporting procedures. About 125 groups in the message are unrecovered or unrecoverable:

> **Your no. 613. The incident involving J. [Name Withheld, rlb] should be regarded as a compromise of MLAD. The cause of this is ALEKSIJ's [KGB officer Yakolev] completely unsatisfactory work with the agents on ENORMOZ. His work with [9 groups unrecovered] for this reason we consider it of the utmost importance to ensure supervision so that the COUNTRY [U.S.]**
>
> **[14 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **we once more [3 groups unrecovered] attention to [2 groups unrecovered] our instructions. For the future [4 groups unrecovered]: immediately inform us by telegraph about each meeting with the agents of ENORMOZ. In [C% the next post] [3 groups unrecovered] on this same question to send the most precise reports on meetings,**
>
> **[14 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **[c%] every meeting with permanent staff**
>
> **[14 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **from all these areas. You**
>
> **[18 groups unrecovered]**

[29] In XY–54, 1 April 1952, Patrick FitzPatrick advised GCHQ that Lamphere had concluded that this message was based on, "a digest of information made by MLAD himself rather than direct quotations from the texts of official reports or documents."

**to seek safe flats in the areas of the camps. This question you must**

**[17 groups unrecovered]**

**our workers on the development**

**[35 groups unrecovered]**

**J. [name withheld] case meetings [or meeting] of our operational worker with MLAD you must**

**[4 groups unrecovered]**

The person J. whose name is withheld was a young physicist working with MLAD (Theodore A. Hall) in New Mexico on the atomic bomb project. The nature of the compromising incident is not known. Note that the Center wants New York KGB to consider seeking safe houses in the Santa Fe/Los Alamos area. The timing of this message is quite interesting: even by that late date, the KGB was still vigorously collecting information on the atomic bomb, was concerned about the security of the operation, but was willing to take an aggressive step: getting safe houses in New Mexico.

25. San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 619,620, 27 Nov 1945, to VIKTOR, signature unrecovered. While the second part (quoted below) of this two part message concerns the atomic bomb, its meaning is somewhat unclear. San Francisco KGB reports that a Professor S. [name withheld, rlb] who had written a book about atomic energy was forbidden to do something. Apparently the professor was willing to provide information, not in his book, and this could be obtained by the KGB. The message contains a reference to a letter from unidentified covername "D." to unidentified covername ERNEST [formerly known as ERIE/IRI]. Covername VOLKOV = Andrej R. Orlov, KGB, under Soviet Government Purchasing Commission cover. The second part of the message:

**After this Professor S. was forbidden to print [4 groups unrecovered] laboratory. ERNEST has**

**[17 groups unrecovered]**

**In the book there is no information about the quantity of uranium being crushed but he [d% confirms] this information in conversations with the people connected with [6 groups unrecovered] at his place and can turn it over to us at any time. In the book there is a complete description of the process with a diagram and all necessary materials are enumerated.**

**Two weeks ago ERNEST received a letter from D. who said that he had [b% not written] because of lack of time.**

**VOLKOV permitted ERNEST to meet the people with whom Professor S. collaborated. Among them are the engineer P. [name withheld] and Professor**

**[67 groups unrecovered]**

26. A Consular message, San Francisco —> Moscow, 13 November 1945 (sent in the true Dip system, [redacted] contains a reference to the atomic bomb but is of a separate class from the foregoing messages. The consulate seems to be passing along some open source(?) information on uranium deposits. In a separate paragraph the consulate mentions Frank Oppenheimer, and that he is the brother of J. Robert Oppenheimer. The term "atomic research" follows the names. The next two sentences:

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

**One must [1 group unrecovered] that scholars who have taken part in these pursuits are under the surveillance of American counterintelligence.**

**Robert OPPENHEIMER and the Ernest LAWRENCE mentioned in our number 435 (two of the chief scientific leaders on the atomic bomb) [53 groups unrecovered].**

E. Comments

I have omitted 5 messages concerning Klaus Fuchs: two from 1945 are not in the NSA Venona collection: No. 298, Moscow —> NY, 31 March may not have been translated anyway; No. 349, also M —> NY, 10 Apr 1945, cannot be found. Nos. 1345, 1397 and 1403 all NY —> Moscow, concern Fuchs' sister (the first two) and a covername change (the latter).

The NSA Venona Collection contains one Arlington Hall reference to the atomic bomb from the period before the Venona breakthrough:

29 September 45

*MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL HAYES:*

*SUBJECT; Traffic Concerning Atomic Energy*

*1. MIS [the Military Intelligence Service] is very interested in any traffic concerning the atomic bomb or the study of atomic energy. Any messages on that subject should be processed in full as a priority matter.*

*2. Attached is a list of common words connected with that subject which may be of value to the scanners or translators in [Sigint operations] in recognizing any such messages.*

*E.E. HUDDLESON*
*Lt Col, General Staff*[30]

[30] Huddleson had been in Carter Clarke's G–2 Special Branch and had served as one of his SSOs in the field.

# XII. HARRY DEXTER WHITE. KGB COVERNAMES: JURIST, LAWYER, RICHARD

## A. Background

**Harry Dexter White (top row 2nd from left) with Henry Morgenthau, Secretary of the Treasury. White had three known KGB covernames: JURIST, LAWYER, and RICHARD.**

Harry Dexter White was born in Boston in 1892. He received B.A. and M.A. degrees from Stanford and in 1935, a PhD. from Harvard. He joined the Treasury Department in 1934. In 1941 he became an Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury in charge of the Division of Monetary Research, and in early 1945 received a promotion to Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. He was the chief technical expert for the U.S. at the Bretton Woods Monetary Conference in July 1944. During September 1944 he drew up the Morgenthau Plan (on behalf of Treasury Secretary Morgenthau) for post-war Germany. He attended the San Francisco (UN) Conference in 1945. He resigned from Treasury in 1946 to become head of the International Monetary Fund, and left that position in 1947.

Both Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bentley told the FBI that White was a Russian agent — Chambers knew him from the Washington D.C. GRU net of the mid to late 1930s. Bentley did not know him personally but became aware of his activities on behalf of the KGB through her work, during the Second World War, as courier and auxiliary agent handler for the New York KGB.

White denied all allegations. He died suddenly on 16 August 1948, shortly after appearing before a Congressional investigating committee. White suffered from a heart condition, but there was some belief at the time that he had committed suicide. White had excellent connections in the Roosevelt administration, and the accusations against him, then and since, have caused much controversy.

B. Harry White in Venona

Harry Dexter White appears in 17 Venona messages under three different covernames. Meredith Gardner found his covername(s) in Venona very early: Gardner noted the covernames RICHARD and LO... (which turned out to be LOJER or, in English, LAWYER) in his Special Report #1 of July/August 1947. However, Gardner does not seem to have mentioned the covername again in special reports #2 thru #11, so it is difficult to know the very earliest date when there was substantial Venona concerning White.

The earliest surviving Gardner translations of messages bearing one of White's covernames do not have a date, but because of the Comint codeword they are known to have been issued in 1949/50. Gardner's footnotes on some translations from that time state that covername YURIST (JURIST) had been "previously rendered as GEORGE (YURIJ)." Some of Oliver Kirby's undated briefing notes, almost certainly prepared in 1948 and 1949, quote parts of an important KGB message concerning White and use the covername GEORGE. Kirby also wrote that, GEORGE, "appears to be employed in the State Department, but is unidentified at present."

Bob Lamphere's covername study of June 1950 lists YURIST as an unidentified covername found in three KGB messages of 1944, and that this person "appears to have been connected with individuals on a very high level in the United States government." In a handwritten note of 22 June 1950, Lamphere told Gardner that JURIST was probably Harry White; the Bureau officially put this in writing on 16 Oct 1950.[1] White probably was not identified in the Venona produced up to the time of his Congressional testimony in the summer of 1948 (Bob Lamphere did not become fully involved in Venona until October of that year).

When considered along with what is known about White's activities in the 1930s, the Venona messages about him give a good outline of the changes in KGB agent handling procedures that took place during the 1940s, when White dealt not only with veteran Communist Party member and KGB agent-officer Greg Silvermaster, but also directly with regular KGB officers. We do not know (at least not from Venona) when or how White switched from GRU to KGB control (according to Venona, Alger Hiss, however, remained under GRU control as late as March 1945). In this section we will see the important changes in the agent handling part of KGB tradecraft, and see excellent examples of the two main types of KGB New York messages: those transmitting intelligence, and those concerned with tradecraft, that is the handling and security of agent operations. The messages (all KGB):

1. New York —> Moscow, No. 590, 29 April 1944, from MAJ to the 8th Department (the Center's political intelligence element). White — covername YURIST — is the source of information given in the first paragraph of this message. Covername HEN HARRIER is Secretary of State Cordell Hull, and CHANNEL PILOT is Vice President Henry Wallace:

> **According to YURIST's data, HEN HARRIER in a conversation with CHANNEL PILOT touched upon the question of giving us [the USSR, rlb] a 5 billion dollar loan. The idea appealed to CHANNEL PILOT and he discussed it with**
>
> **[33 groups unrecoverable]**

2. New York —> Moscow, Nos. 1119–1121, 4–5 August 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. This is one of the most important Harry White messages. First translated by Gardner, it was formally issued by GCHQ in October

[1]Items 50–21 and 50–49 in the Venona Collection.

1952, with amendments in 1958 and 1961.[2] The message is complicated and the first half poorly recovered. The message:

> **KOL'TsOV advises, 'On 4th August I arrived in [New York City]. I have not seen MAKSIM since Monday.[3] I pass on the contents of a conversation with YURIST on 31st July in his apartment.[4] To my questions YURIST replied as follows:**
>
> **1. Without attempting [3 groups unrecovered]:**
>
> **(a) DECREE [Lend Lease]**
>
> **[15 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **and so on. Definitive decisions [on interest?] were not arrived at**
>
> **[26 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **obtaining the document extremely risky.**
>
> **[38 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable with phrase '5 to 10 years' in the middle]**
>
> **On the technique of control over Germany while reparations are being paid there is for the time being no definite opinion. YURIST thinks that a definite amount of reparations should be set in marks and this amount should be subsequently reviewed and reduced if Germany fulfills her obligations; if she does not, Germany should be reoccupied.**
>
> **[12 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **YURIST's opinion the latter**
>
> **[13 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **with NABOB [Secretary Morgenthau] or KAPITAN [FDR].**
>
> **(c) The trade policy of the COUNTRY [U.S.] [1 group unrecovered] which will be put into effect by means of bilateral agreements with individual states covering 2–3 years. There will be no one set of conditions or removal of tariff barriers.**
>
> **(d) Loans. In this sphere the only concrete thing that is being done is the preparation of a credit for us of 10 milliards.**
>
> **[13 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **The credit will be repaid by the export of our raw material to the COUNTRY [2 groups unrecovered] be caused by NABOB's not being able to get conversations on this business with KAPITAN.**

---

[2]Neither NSA nor GCHQ prepared a complete re-issue of the 1952 translation: the two amendments cover only portions of the original translation, making it a bit difficult to use. The earliest Gardner translation I have found is XY–63.2, hand-dated 8 September 1952. However, because the footnotes identify YURIST as White, and it was this message that allowed the FBI to nail down the identification, there must have been earlier, but unlocated, versions.

[3]KOL'TsOV is an unidentified covername, possibly for a KGB officer from Washington (?) who is returning to Moscow from New York or who had been dispatched from Moscow for a special mission. He was a Russian monetary expert who had attended conferences in Washington — but from the clandestine nature of his meeting with White and the discussion of security and the next meeting etc., it would appear that KOL'TsOV is either KGB or a trained KGB cooptee. I think the former more likely. MAKSIM is the covername for KGB General Vasilij Mikhajlovich Zubilin, sometime Resident in NYC, and at the time of this message the Resident in Washington. The Anonymous Letter of 1943 had named Zubilin as the senior KGB officer in the U.S. at that time and the officer in charge of the massacre of Poles at Katyn Forest in 1940.

[4]White's apartment in Washington, D.C. or New York.

**2. NABOB [Secretary Morgenthau] and YURIST's trip to Moscow is being delayed for an indefinite period and may take place after the elections. On 5th August both are leaving for Normandy and [London] where [7 groups unrecovered] suppose that [the UK] will [1 group unrecovered] with them about Lend Lease payments. The fact is that the UK's dollar balances have risen as a result of the transport work and the expenditure made by the army of the United States in Europe; therefore the U.S. is demanding partial repayment of the Lend Lease loan [51 groups unrecoverable]**

**[51 groups unrecoverable]**

**[d% use] of amphibians.**

**4. The program of the oil conferences**

**[63 groups unrecoverable or unrecovered]**

**5. The role**

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

**there will be achieved a compromise agreement to exclude from the Polish Government the most hostile elements [3 groups unrecovered] Committee of Liberation in the COUNTRY [U.S.]**

**7. Finland has lost the sympathy of the public in the [U.S.], therefore the restoration of the 1940 frontier will not arouse objections from the U.S.**

**8. As regards the Baltic Countries the U.S. thinks that we [the Russians] seized them, but the restoration of the 1940 frontier will not arouse objections from the U.S.**

**9. YURIST is convinced that [President Roosevelt] will win the elections if [1 group unrecovered] not [3 groups unrecovered] severe military disaster. TRUMAN's nomination is calculated to ensure the votes of the conservative wing of the party.**

**As regards the technique of further work with us YURIST said that his wife was [C% ready] for any self-sacrifice; he himself did not think about his personal security, but a compromise would lead to a political scandal and the discredit of all supporters of the New Deal [or, new course, rlb], therefore he would have to be very cautious. He asked whether he should [5 groups unrecovered] his work with us. I replied that he should refrain. YURIST has no suitable apartment for a permanent meeting place; all his friends are family people. Meetings could be held at their houses in such a way that one meeting devolved on each every 4–5 months. He proposes infrequent conversations lasting up to half an hour while driving in his automobile.**

**YURIST has fixed the next meeting for 17th–19th August and arranged appropriate conditions for it. He returns to [Washington] about the 17th of August.**

**I leave [that is, KOL'TsOV] for Washington on the 8th of August and from there for Moscow on the 12th of August.**

**Telegraph the date of receipt of this telegram.**



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

4. NY —> Moscow, No. 1251, 2 September, to VIKTOR from MAJ. This is one of the often cited covername change messages (the same message that changed Julius Rosenberg's covername from ANTENNA to LIBERAL). However, this message does not refer to covername YURIST but instead makes the change from covername LOJER [LAWYER], not previously seen, to new covername RICHARD. Apparently the New York KGB, or the Center, didn't like the covername LOJER. However, LOJER was used again, presumably by mistake, in a New York message five days later, which follows.

5. NY —> Moscow, Nos. 1271–1274, 7 Sep 1944, to VIKTOR from MAJ. Most of this message consists of the transmission of "HOMER's report of 2nd September"; HOMER being Donald Maclean. The message reports HOMER's views on the post-war relationship of the UK to the U.S. and the economic, political and military policies of the U.S.–UK regarding an occupied Germany. KGB spy HOMER/Maclean then reports on the views of fellow KGB agent Harry White — presumably without knowing that White is a comrade. The relevant extract from Maclean's report:

> **NABOB [Secretary Morgenthau] obtained KAPITAN's [President Roosevelt] consent to the use of yellow-seal dollars by American troops instead of military marks as had been previously agreed with the British and the Russians. The purpose of this is to turn the American occupation forces into the economic masters of Germany. [John J.] McCLOY, LOJER [Harry White] and high officials in NABOB's establishment as well as the British are opposed to this.**[5]

In the next 12 Venona translations, White is reported under covername RICHARD

6. NY —> Moscow, No. 1388–1389, 1 Oct 1944, to VIKTOR from MAJ. This message will be quoted in a separate chapter on tradecraft and nets, but the following is a quick summary and quotations relevant to Harry White:

The Illegal Resident, covername ALBERT had recently met with KGB net controller Greg Silvermaster (covername ROBERT) who complained to him as follows:

> **On the question of the possibility of splitting ROBERT's group into smaller units ALBERT gave the following answer.**
>
> **KOL'TsOV's meeting with [C% RICHARD] and KOL'TsOV's attempt to obtain answers to a number of questions of an international character produced an unfavorable impression on ROBERT. ROBERT was surprised at our decision to have recourse to the aid of a special man for raising with [C% RICHARD] questions on which ROBERT himself as leader of the group, in his own words, is working ceaselessly. Why did we decide to ask [D% RICHARD] [26 groups unrecoverable].**

The rest of the message continues the theme of the transition from the old ways of agent handling — via a Party member such as ROBERT/Silvermaster — to more direct KGB control. MAJ observed that, "in ROBERT's tendency not to 'relinquish' anyone, ZVUK's education is making itself felt." ZVUK [SOUND] the covername for the late Jacob Golos, Elizabeth Bentley's lover, was a U.S. citizen, a CPUSA official,

[5]This is an important Venona message, but more relevant to Maclean's treachery than White's. It is difficult to imagine that any US–UK post-war planning could have been kept secret from the KGB (and GRU): Maclean, Hiss and White, along with Lauchlin Currie should have been able to give the Russians complete diplomatic and economic policy coverage, with Ullman covering the War Department General Staff, and a legion of agents handling the OSS (and of course Bill Weisband watching Arlington Hall).

apparently a sworn officer of the KGB (but not an illegal or a regular KGB officer in the sense of being connected to a Soviet establishment).[6] More later.

Now for the KGB's college tuition assistance plan for the White family.

7. NY —> Moscow, No. 1634, 20 Nov 1944, to VIKTOR from MAJ. The covernames in this message: ROBERT= Greg Silvermaster, KGB net controller; ALBERT= KGB illegal resident Akhmerov; PILOT=William Ludwig "Lud" Ullman, a Captain on the Air Staff at the Pentagon. The translation is quoted in full:

> **According to advice from ROBERT, RICHARD's wife has complained recently about [D% financial]**
>
> **[65 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **in particular with business since this would relieve them of heavy expenses.**
>
> **ROBERT told RICHARD's wife, who knows about her husband's participation with us, that we would willingly have helped them and that in view of all the circumstances would not allow them to leave CARTHAGE [Washington, DC , rlb]. ROBERT thinks that RICHARD would have refused a regular payment but might accept gifts as a mark of our gratitude for**
>
> **[7 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **daughter's expenses which may come to up to two thousand a year.**
>
> **ALBERT said to ROBERT that in his opinion we would agree to provide for RICHARD's daughter's education and definitely advised ROBERT, PILOT and the rest against attempting to offer RICHARD assistance.**[7]
>
> **While sharing ALBERT's opinion about the necessity for assistance we draw your attention to the fact that RICHARD has taken the offer of assistance favorably. Please do not delay your answer.**

8. NY —> Moscow, No. 79, 18 Jan 1945, to VIKTOR from MAJ. This message gives a good idea of the depth of KGB penetration into the Treasury Department and the influence of KGB agent-officer Greg Silvermaster. This translation is quoted in full. Covernames in this message include:

ROBERT: KGB agent-officer Greg Silvermaster

NABOB: Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau (a victim, not a villain.)

ROUBLE: probably Harold Glasser, KGB agent and Treasury employee

REJDER: KGB agent and Treasury employee Victor Perlo

ZhENYa: KGB agent and Treasury Department secretary-clerk Sonia Steinman Gold.

White continues to be RICHARD.

This message is somewhat confusing because the New York KGB chief, MAJ (Stepan Apresyan) believes that his net controller Greg Silvermaster has made a "slip of the pen", as he puts it, in describing White's position/title. Silvermaster, as usual, has his facts together. The message:

[6] I have suggested the term "agent-officer" for the likes of Golos, Silvermaster, and perhaps even Weisband. I suppose Hiss and Philby simply considered themselves as, respectively, GRU and KGB officers.

[7] White's wife was Ann Terry White; they had two daughters.

**According to ROBERT's report he may soon be presented with an opportunity of obtaining from RICHARD ROUBLE's appointment to RICHARD's post, as the latter will soon be appointed assistant secretary. (MAJ's note:[8] It is possible that this is a slip of the pen, for RICHARD and others are already assistants if [C% ROBERT] [1 group unrecovered] NABOB's department, where he obviously can be promoted to the post of deputy. ROBERT has repeatedly suggested that ROUBLE be turned over to him. According to our information he could get better results from ROUBLE than our line. He suspects that ROUBLE is connected with us through other channels. ALBERT emphasizes that ROUBLE was passive in the REJDER group although he gave us valuable material. Some months ago ROBERT complained that ROUBLE was hiding important documents from ZhENYa (his secretary).[9] If we are convinced of ROUBLE's good faith toward the [American Communist Party] ROBERT would like to take him into his group. ROBERT has always been against appointing two of our groups to one department and [D% instead asks] that our probationers from RICHARD's department be under his direction to avoid misunderstandings. In ALBERT's opinion, if ROUBLE is reliable from our point of view he ought to be turned over to ROBERT. ROBERT does not want to promote ROUBLE to RICHARD's post unless he takes him into his group; on the other hand he is not quite sure that he will be able to get ROUBLE into this post, as it is possible that somebody else is already earmarked for it.**

**Wire your decision by priority telegram not later than 21 January indicating the method of establishing contact between ALBERT and ROUBLE if you agree to including ROUBLE in ROBERT's group.**

9. NY —> Moscow, No. 83, 16 Jan 1945, to VIKTOR — 8th Department (signature not recovered). This message, though poorly recovered, shows White providing inside financial advice to the KGB:

**According to ROBERT's information KAPITALIST [probably Averill Harriman, rlb] advised the BANK that we had requested a loan of 6 billion [C% dollars] [1 group unrecovered] [C% years] at 2–2.5 percent annually. In RICHARD's words we could get a loan under more favorable circumstances**

**[80 groups unrecovered or unrecoverable]**

10. Moscow —> New York, No. 248, 19 March 1945, from VIKTOR, to MAJ and to ALBERT. This is a most interesting message, or would be except that 250 groups are unrecovered or unrecoverable. In the recovered part of this message the Center starts to explain to MAJ and ALBERT why they sent KOL'TsOV to meet directly with Harry White instead of working through net controller Greg Silvermaster. We don't see most of the explanation —though we could guess it. Following is the translation:

**In sending KOL'TsOV to meet RICHARD we were guided by**

**[34 groups unrecovered]**

**with KOL'TsOV**

[8]MAJ's note is in the KGB message, i.e. this is not an editorial comment by the author.

[9]According to Elizabeth Bentley's statement to the FBI in 1945, Harry White placed Sonia Gold in a secretarial position in the Treasury Department so that she could help remove, process, copy the documents he and his group were stealing for the KGB.

**[78 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

**[1 group unrecovered] first part of the telegram [C%] gives [4 groups unrecovered] worker". Neither ALBERT nor ROBERT it seems understood the point of our measures on this matter. In a conversation with KOL'TsOV**

**[135 groups unrecovered]**

11. Moscow —> New York, No. 292, 29 March 1945, from VIKTOR (addressee not given). Here the Center warns New York that the composition of ROBERT's group is known to many Communist Party members in Washington:

**We have already informed you in number 1160 of the fact that the composition of [c% ROBERT's] group is known to many FELLOW–COUNTRYMEN [C.P. members] in CARTHAGE [Washington]. It has been ascertained further there is known also RICHARD's connection**

**[43 groups unrecoverable]**

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

**[note by rlb: most of the rest of the message unrecovered/unrecoverable, except for the following words, separated by the non-recovered groups:]**

**ROBERT with ALBERT ..... ALBERT ....ROBERT.....details of the work of the group. Pass on to ALBERT ..... data on the sources and agents.**[10]

12. Moscow —> New York, No. 328, 6 April 1945, signature/address not found. Here the Center instructs New York:

**Tell ALBERT to make arrangements with ROBERT about maintaining contact with RICHARD and PILOT in BABYLON**

**[9 groups unrecovered]**

That meant that the illegal ALBERT was to tell Greg Silvermaster to make sure the KGB could be in contact with Harry White and Lud Ullman in San Francisco during the UN conference there. With that message the Venona story of Harry White switches to San Francisco.

13. San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 230, 4 May 1945, from MAJ to VIKTOR, with a copy to the 8th Department. MAJ had been dispatched from New York to San Francisco to handle KGB operations at the UN conference. This is a poorly recovered message — some 150 groups unavailable. However, the first sentence states:

**The contents of a long conversation with RICHARD we are transmitting....**

**[note by rlb: the other recovered words of the message suggest a little of what Harry White reported to the KGB]:**

**Vatican ... support of the Catholics is unnecessary. In the words of the Polish Ambassador in London ... Vatican ....pressure on the U.S. ....about the right of veto ...**

[10]The second internal message in external no. 292 is also poorly recovered but mentions the name FRIEDMAN, Covername ADAM (possibly Rebecca Getzoff) and that ALBERT's son is "alive and well".

14. San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 235,236, 5 May 1945, to VIKTOR from MAJ, is another poorly recovered message. White's covername RICHARD has been found five times in the recovered portions of this message. The message began:

> **Your No. 2833. SERGEJ reports: Previously in the parole the first four words were not enough. Now hardly [10 groups unrecovered]**

In this message SERGEJ = probably Vladimir Pravdin, the KGB NY sub-Resident under TASS cover.[11] Thereafter interspersed among the 288 unrecovered and unrecoverable groups were recovered truenames of U..S. political leaders Truman, Rockefeller, Vandenberg, Stassen, Eaton. Quoting the rest of the message:

> **[18 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **RICHARD [3 groups unrecovered]. VANDENBERG**
>
> **[25 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **Republican party. [3 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **An if something prevents a successful conclusion of the Conference, VANDENBERG will declare that the Democratic Party of TRUMAN and STETTINIUS is to blame,**
>
> **[12 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **TRUMAN and STETTINIUS [4 groups unrecovered] mere role of 'messenger'**
>
> **[22 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **RICHARD stated: 'TRUMAN and STETTINIUS want to achieve the success of the conference at any price. In**
>
> **[19 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **in relation to the USSR and**
>
> **[26 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **will agree on the veto. Referring to**
>
> **[59 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **questions. RICHARD considers that the press-conference**
>
> **[18 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **position of the USA and USSR on the given questions, could be an effective method of counteracting the attempts of the USA to put the USSR in a disadvantageous position. RICHARD also expressed the following views: the idea of economic sanctions is very popular in the USA. The proposal of applying economic sanctions by a simple majority without the right of veto, undoubtedly would find wide support in the public. In RICHARD's opinion, either England or the USA and possibly both countries will oppose the proposal of refusing the veto. [18 groups unrecovered] to put England and the USA in a disadvantageous position.'**

[11] Otherwise in S.F. KGB traffic covername SERGEJ = Viktor Afanasev, a KGB officer handling port and merchant fleet security matters.

15. San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 259, 13 May 1945, to the 8th Department, signature not recovered. The KGB uses a Q&A format in this poorly recovered message. The first word of the message is RICHARD, followed by 6 unrecovered groups. This message could be part of a transcript of a press conference, or some kind of fact sheet, or it could be White's answers to a KGB questionnaire. The translation of the recovered parts of the message is quoted as follows, with .... occasionally representing the groups not recovered:

**RICHARD [6 groups unrecovered]**

**Question. .... disagreements between the delegations of the U.S.A. and Great Britain?**

**Answer. Judging by externals [1 group unrecovered] cannot [1 group unrecovered] in regard to territorial trusteeship.... I [3 groups unrecovered] question unsuccessfully.**

**Question. What questions....**

**[apparently the Answer] (2) of the obligatory entry of all nations into the new organization; (3) of the right of permanent members of the Security Council to a veto; (4) of the participation of the intra-American system....application of sanctions in case of a conflict in the western hemisphere.**

**Question. What do they say about the Poles?**

**Answer. [27 groups unrecovered] accredited in [London] and [55 groups unrecovered]**

**Question. .... delegations about the tactics of the Soviet delegation?**

**Answer. Without doubt the Soviet delegation**

**[35 groups unrecovered]**

**STETTINIUS....**

**committee with ....**

**Question. [1 group unrecovered] Anglo–American delegations about the tactics .....?**

**Answer. The Anglo–American delegates hold**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**many friendly dinners in**

**[38 groups unrecovered]**

**delegations....**

16. New York —> Moscow, Nos. 781–787, 25, 26 May 1945, from SERGEJ to VIKTOR with a copy to the 8th Department. Covername SERGEJ was Vladimir Sergeevich Pravdin, a senior KGB officer in New York under the cover of Editor of TASS News Agency in New York City. He covered the San Francisco UN Conference for TASS (and the KGB). This long message concerned press and other reactions to Truman becoming President. The message will be quoted at length in a later chapter of this study. Covername RICHARD was found four times in this message, though the NSA/GCHQ translators (in the 5th reissue used here, as well as the 4th) came to the curious conclusion that the RICHARD of this message, "seems an unlikely figure to occur in this list of newspaper correspondents." That might seem to be so for the first appearance of RICHARD, but when all mentions are considered this RICHARD is undoubtedly still Harry D. White. The mentions of RICHARD:

- In Part III of the message:

**In newspaper circles in [San Francisco] and [Washington] it is common knowledge, as has been confirmed to me on separate [1 group unrecovered] by ShMEL, RICHARD, ShEF [and three newspapermen whose true names are given] and many other correspondents, the representatives of the [State Department], GREW, DUNN, HOLMES....**[12]

- **In Part V of the message:**

**In a recent conversation with me, the Director of [names withheld, rlb] in the main confirmed RICHARD's statements about the [U.S.] policy in CHINA (which have been reported to you)**

- **In Part VI of the message:**

**ShMEL and [another journalist, name withheld] have expressed serious alarm at the anti-Soviet atmosphere which has arisen in the [U.S.] and were extremely indignant at what [Truman] had said .... the UK. [Stettinius'] statement on the question of the sixteen Poles was described by ShMEL as 'disgusting servility towards Eden'. RICHARD particularly asked that our attention should be drawn to the fact that the head of the U.S. delegation to the Reparations Commission, [actually represents certain oil interests]**[13] **and in RICHARD's opinion his appointment is a 'gesture of friendship' by [Truman] to the oil men.**

17. San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 312, 8 June 1945, from MAJ to VIKTOR. Most of the groups of this message are unrecovered/unrecoverable. RICHARD appears toward the end of the message, preceded by references to Francisco Aguirre, Cuban representative to the UN Conference and:

**5. Reyes, a Uruguayan a good democrat of the bourgeois type.**

**6. The Guatemalan delegates are all good people.**

**"RICHARD**

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

**a fool.**

One way to sum up RICHARD!

[12]ShMEL (BUMBLEBEE) was the KGB covername for Walter Lippmann, the well known columnist who will be discussed in Chapter XIX; ShEF is an unidentified covername; one of the three true-named correspondents was of operational interest to the KGB who decided it was safer to use him without making a formal recruitment.

[13]I have edited this, and my words are in the brackets.

## *XII. HARRY DEXTER WHITE. KGB COVERNAMES: JURIST, LAWYER, RICHARD*

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# XIII. NEW YORK KGB: AGENT NETWORKS, TRADECRAFT AND SECURITY

## A. Introduction

The KGB Residencies, though under the tight control of the Moscow Center, exhibited some personality, though this may have been more the result of the different missions and targets than because of the people involved. The New York <—> Moscow lanes have given us by far the greatest amount of exploited traffic of interest to this study; San Francisco is a modest second, Washington a poor third. Yet, it seemed a good idea to give each KGB Residency its due with a chapter for each (as well as special treatment of the Mexico City Residency and the GRU and GRU–naval Residencies). This format, along with the single issue case studies (e.g., the chapters on the Rosenbergs and Harry White), should allow a very considerable sampling of the traffic, in various settings and circumstances.

Though seemingly restricted to the vocabulary of the codebook, the Residencies had the benefit of the spell tables and could really write messages as long and involved as needed — in consideration of course of the workload of the code clerks and the cost of cable traffic (during those times when commercial carriers were used). Certainly parts of many KGB messages are not understood, but this is more often the result of some sort of garble or mistake in preparation, not because the sender lacked a way to convey his meaning. We have seen that some complicated messages were sent relating to the scientific aspects of the atomic bomb; we will see additional examples of complicated matters being handled in the Venona messages.

In this chapter, and the other Residency chapters, we will cover a wide range of topics to show the richness of the Venona material and the KGB's own contemporary description of its policies, procedures and operations.

## B. Internal Security

The security of the Soviet state and especially the survival of Stalin's dictatorship commanded the greatest part of KGB resources. However, the Venona messages largely concern the operations of the First Chief Directorate, the foreign intelligence element of the KGB, rather than the larger directorates involved in security, repression and terror. The Venona traffic contains surprisingly little material that suggests the atmosphere of terror (this only a few years after the murder of not only much of the KGB leadership but also many people who had served abroad in KGB and GRU intelligence operations). Fawning references to Stalin are entirely absent; references to Beria (who is probably covername PETROV) are mostly professional, that is, certain classes of information are addressed to him rather than VIKTOR. The New York Residency even shows a certain amount of courage in occasionally criticizing the Center. Nevertheless, Venona contains a fair amount of internal security information: security of Soviet personnel and establishments abroad, security of KGB operations.

In this section we will deal with what might be called security countermeasures, leaving the operational security of KGB activities to another section (with one exception: a case where the KGB believed one of their agents was about to go bad will be described in this section).

In a circular message of 10 April 1945, VIKTOR warned the Residents that "despite repeated instructions", Residents continued to mix operational and intelligence information in the same messages, and failed to note in their intelligence messages that the boilerplate "Copy to 8th Department" was to appear on all intelligence messages the Residencies sent to the Moscow Center.[1] However, VIKTOR's warning of the consequences was not exactly chilling: "We categorically demand that this instruction be carried out so that we are not compelled

[1] The translation is from Moscow —> Canberra, No. 68, 10 April 1945, but this is a circular and the U.S. Residencies were on distribution. The 8th Department handled analysis of intelligence collected by the Residencies, especially political intelligence.

to issue endless reminders." VIKTOR said that the two types of messages should not be mixed and he gave the following definitions of what should go in each category of messages (I use the language of the translation):

Operational Messages

- Questions of recruitments
- Work on the development of individuals
- Correspondence on organizational matters
- Materials on the Soviet colony

Intelligence Messages

- [by implication, intelligence information]
- also, documentary data
- materials containing information for reference purposes
- materials describing the agent network
- structure, methods and content of the work of foreign intelligence services

VIKTOR concluded:

> **In replies to inquiries from us it should be indicated that a copy is to be passed to the 8th Department, if the material is in the nature of intelligence. It is forbidden to touch on operational questions in intelligence telegrams. Cipher clerks are forbidden to combine intelligence and operational telegrams in a single message.**
>
> **It is the duty of the cipher clerk to see that intelligence telegrams carry a note about a copy for the 8th Department if the Resident has forgotten to do so.**

Some of VIKTOR's policy, at least in translation, seems a bit conflicting, but I believe he meant that operational messages would carry information on spotting, assessing and recruiting of agents because such messages would use the true names of potential agent candidates and expose certain techniques. However, the work of the agent networks (not merely the intelligence they produced) should be put into the intelligence messages, perhaps because the covernames provided security. Nonetheless, VIKTOR does seem to allow some mixing of source and method information with intelligence reporting information. The category, "materials on the Soviet colony", to be reported only in operational messages would seem to cover the internal security/security countermeasures. Examples from Venona follow.

KGB Investigations

- NY —> Moscow, No. 637, 6 May 1944. The first sentence of the KGB New York Resident's message to the Center explains the problem: possibly a murder made to look like a suicide:

> **As you will know, the wife of URAEVSKIJ who was recalled hanged herself last year.**

**LEONID [a KGB officer][2] reported to me that the Neighbor [GRU] here passed to him through MAKSIM for expert analysis two notes written by URAEVSKIJ's wife before her death and a specimen of U.'s own handwriting as the Neighbor had detected a similarity in the handwritings of husband and wife.**

The New York Resident, covername MAJ (Stephen Apresyan) further reported that he and LEONID were "in agreement that a similarity in the handwritings of these texts does exist." MAJ told the Center that LEONID had kept the documents. As the suspect was GRU the question was whether the material should be sent to the Center or returned to New York GRU with "an indication that we consider a special expert analysis of the handwritings essential." We do not see the outcome of this in Venona.[3]

• KGB New York reported at least two other suicides of people under their jurisdiction. On 13 May 1943, "in New York the second mate of the 'KOMSOMOLETS ARKTIKI', NEDEL'TShE Petr Semenovich hung himself.....[he] was a PROBATIONER of the ARKhANGEL .." In other words, the deceased had been a KGB internal security agent/informant in merchant shipping. Most of the message is unrecovered, but the fragments indicate a KGB investigation into the matter. New York concludes that a detailed report had been sent to the Center by courier.[4] The other mysterious death looks like the handwriting case and again involves the wife of a GRU officer:[5]

**On 13 June [1944] the wife of the NEIGHBOR [GRU] POLYaKOV, who has only just arrived here, died. In a conversation with DEDUShKA, POLYaKOV let fall the following phrase: 'I cannot understand why she wanted to have anything to do with me.' Symptoms [2 groups unrecovered] auto-intoxication.[6]**

The GRU officer had quarreled with his wife en route and he had wanted to put her off in a Siberian port (as reported by KGB code clerk, covername BORIS who was a passenger on the same ship). POLYaKOV's reaction to his wife's death was rated as "strange in the extreme". Two KGB officers had been "commissioned to keep an eye on P.'s behavior."[7]

## Reliability of Soviet Personnel

The KGB concerned itself with the reliability of Soviets in the United States, taking a special interest in merchant seamen.[8] Some examples from Venona.

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[2] Leonid was a technically trained KGB officer. He handled document and other photography for the Residency and must have had some other forensic training i.e. handwriting identification. The KGB always had a criminal investigative responsibility, its jurisdiction varying over the years.

[3] Covername MAKSIM was KGB General Zubilin who had been Resident in New York before moving to Washington. Zubilin, was a big time murderer — KGB OIC for the Katyn massacres of 1940.

[4] NY —> Moscow No. 723, 19 May 1943, from MAKSIM to VIKTOR.

[5] NY —> Moscow, No. 852, 16 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR.

[6] Meaning that suicide by poisoning was suspected.

[7] This interesting message, which is fully recovered, also has an interesting question from MAJ to the Center: the Consul General in NY (the aforementioned covername DEDUShKA) had been asking to be kept informed of political questions, "which affect him too"; MAJ needed to know how far he could go in providing intelligence to him — he asked for "concrete limits" for confiding in DEDUShKA, "without of course revealing the sources."

[8] The KGB San Francisco spent much of its time chasing merchant seamen who deserted. See that chapter for many examples of this.

• In a message of 20 December 1944[9], New York expressed its concern to the Center about a Russian naval officer on duty in the U.S. (for minesweeper training and/or the transfer of U.S. minesweepers to the Soviet Navy):

> **Senior Lieutenant MUDRAK, Aleksandr Mitrofanovich who is in [New York City], along with other elements of unreliable behavior is continuing to maintain a suspicious liaison with an American woman [name withheld] recommended by a competitor [U.S. intell/CI service]... [he] goes into raptures over America and expresses a wish to remain in the [U.S.]. On the basis of this do you consider it advisable to send MUDRAK to the Union by Air from Washington D.C. under the pretext of sending an urgent package to MORFLOT? With MUDRAK a ship would be very difficult and might lead to undesirable consequences.**

• In a message of 14 August 1944, New York asks the Center to help the Consulate get rid of an overly talkative courier — interesting to note that the Residency does not or cannot intervene unilaterally:

> **DEDUShKA's [covername for consul general Kiselev] attempt to have the diplomatic courier TRUShIN recalled is not meeting with success.**
>
> **In view of the latter's garrulity — he took it into his head to 'explain' to one of the workers of the PLANT [covername for Consulate] that STEPAN is replacing LEONID and does photography 'upstairs' — I consider it advisable that you should intervene in the question of his posting.**
>
> **For your information TRUShIN, despite his knowledge, is disposed to laziness which is supported by his dissatisfaction with the position he occupies.**

The KGB Residency operated in part under the cover of the Consulate in New York (KGB Resident MAJ was vice consul), and the aforementioned Consul General Kiselev — covername DEDUShKA — often appears in Venona. In a message of May 1944, MAJ told the Center that Kiselev had decided to divorce his wife and marry Olympiada Grigor'evna Tronova, covername LYuSYa who had a connection to the Residency as a KGB officer or agent/informant. MAJ thought this was not a good idea as Lyusya "would try to subject DEDUShKA to her influence, which would have an entirely deleterious effect on the staff of the Consulate."[10]

The control and handling of informants within the KGB Residencies, as opposed to other Soviet entities abroad, is of course only occasionally seen in Venona. In one such example, VIKTOR tells New York that covername DUVER [unidentified] is, "our probationer [agent] in VADIM's office". VADIM, who was Anatolij Borisovich GROMOV, held the cover position of First Secretary at the Embassy in Washington while serving as the KGB Resident.[11] DUVER then looks like a KGB officer on Gromov's staff who also had a Moscow-controlled mission.

A group of Russian students at Columbia University, who operated under KGB control, either as officers or more likely some mixture of officer(s), agent, co-optee, and who were known sometimes by the collective covername THE TEN caused the NY Residency considerable concern. In one message MAJ told VIKTOR that

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[9] No. 1792, NY —> M, 20 Dec 1944.

[10] NY —> Moscow, No. 644, 6 May 1944, signed by MAJ.

[11] Moscow —> NY, No. 227, 13 March 1945 from VIKTOR. This message (quoted in full in a later section) identifies a number of KGB agents or candidates in the U.S.

he had a report on THE TEN from CHEMIST, their group leader or principal watcher. MAJ reported:[12]

> **I conversed with CHEMIST about THE TEN ; according to his account THE TEN [are] conscientious with the exception of RUBIN. Relative to the drinking bout we are sending a resume by CHEMIST. There have been no other incidents. I shall get together before long with [apparently RUBIN and IRA, separately, and get details from them].**
>
> **According to CHEMIST's account right now ARTEM and GRIGORIJ are living together with girl students they made the acquaintance of on the steamer.**

CHEMIST had asked MAJ if his wife could come to the U.S. because of the extension of THE TEN's stay. Further, THE TEN were "asking permission to send telegrams and parcels to their families by designated addresses, in order that your people may intercept them and deliver them to the addressees. Telegraph." MAJ concluded that he would be sending a report in which he would use an open code ("I shall adopt the following conventions") when mentioning certain techniques. This may relate to the internal security of THE TEN and other elements of the Soviet mission, and in any case gives a list of entities and techniques relevant to KGB internal security operations:

| The code | Meaning given in message | True meaning |
|---|---|---|
| B. | The Plant | Consulate |
| ZH. | decipherment | same |
| YU. | editorial office | TASS NY |
| D. | the Factory | AMTORG NY |
| CH. | the Neighbor | GRU |
| SH. | cover | same |
| T. | sound recorders | same |
| R. | eavesdropping | same |
| N. | personnel? | KGB officers |
| P. | the Syndicate | Foreign Ministry |
| H. | courier guard | same |
| M. | surveillance | same |
| F. | the Office | KGB Residency |
| E. | conspiracy | same or security |
| L. | cipher clerk | same |
| G. | worker | KGB officer |

By summer 1944, the KGB in New York had become very alarmed about the reliability of merchant ship (and naval) crews arriving at U.S. ports. The following five messages, NY to Moscow provide considerable information on the situation on both coasts and the KGB response.[13]

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1070, 28 July 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR and SEMEN. Covername SEMEN, for a time thought by the Venona unit to be state security chief Beria, apparently headed a counterintelligence/security directorate at the Center or perhaps a directorate or department dedicated to oversight of Russian sailors, cargo and ships. The message:

[12] NY —> Mosocw, No. 824, 7 June 1944 from MAJ to VIKTOR

[13] This story will be continued in Chapter XX. — the KGB in San Francisco.

**In reply to number 20. Apart from the measures taken through workers of the 5th Line to improve the provision of general attention for Soviet crews on the West Coast I request your permission to carry out the following:**

**1. [ask Ambassador Gromyko's deputy to assign one or two people][14] to the ports for explanatory work among the crews and for taking steps to strengthen the giving of cultural and medical attention through the appropriate apparatuses of the [Soviet Government Purchasing Commission] in the ports.**

**2. Ask KAPUSTIN [4 groups unrecovered] renewal of their treaties with the [British] to take effective measures to return to their ships sailors who have defected, who are considered deserters under our laws in war-time. Please telegraph your consent.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1088–1090, 30 July 1944, from MAJ and AKIM to SEMEN. Co-signatory covername AKIM= Sergej Grigorevich LUK'YaNOV. According to the Anonymous Letter of 1943, he was the KGB officer, under Soviet Government Purchasing Commission cover, responsible for the security of the merchant fleet, i.e. he headed the 5th Line of the KGB in the U.S. This long message, though from the New York Residency, seems to deal entirely with the situation on the West Coast and the shortcomings of the KGB internal security effort there, especially KGB officer covername VITALIJ (usually called V. in this message), true name: Pavel Kuzmich Revizorov. VITALIJ reportedly received an "illegal payment" from a ship captain, and further:

**Unconcealed affairs with women have created around V. an atmosphere of gossip and have undermined his authority in the local apparatus and the agent network connected with it. On his side this has caused irritability, rudeness and strained relations with those around him. All this has led to exceptional slackness in operational work:**

**a) Contact with the ship agent network was not established on all vessels. The guarding of the ships and investigating of obvious cases of sabotage were not carried out. V. did not know how many ships and which were in port or were expected in PORTLAND or SEATTLE. The reports for the agent network for the most part came in haphazardly.**

**b) V. did not control the work of the group leaders [8 groups unrecovered] time liaison was not established with the ship agent network.**

**c) He did not take steps to investigate the sabotage on the ship KOMILES.**

**d) [7 groups unrecovered] did not take steps to ascertain the circumstances of sabotage on the ship ODESSA.**

**e) The serious fact of the loss of the ship IL'ICh he did not relate [c% although this affair came to the knowledge of the Center].**

**[a few phrases excluded, rlb]**

**The resulting position of V. is not serious; according to all information his absentmindedness regarding cover and his desire to leave PORTLAND for home or [8 groups unrecoverable] to recall from PORTLAND, although first having sent instructions to replace him..... In our opinion a suitable candidate is Viktor Vasil'evich S. Since V.'s**

[14] My rough summary; some groups unrecovered

**conduct is a result of both of the prolonged absence of his family and the lack [16 groups unrecovered] Russian agent network on shore and on Soviet ships.**

MAJ/AKIM then concluded the message with an outline of some steps they had taken — apparently both of them had traveled to the West Coast for a personal look at the problem. The message continues (silently edited to exclude a list of covernames of probable informants on ships):

**At numerous meetings with V. the way to fulfill the tasks set by you has been sketched out. At the same time steps have been taken to release V. as much as possible from work connected with his cover by using as a roof VOVChEK who is his superior.[15]The latter considers essential the control or reorganization of the method of work along the whole coast in our interests and the inclusion of himself in our work with V.[16]**

**A preliminary investigation into the circumstances of the sinking of the ship IL'ICh has been completed.**

**In LOS ANGELES I met PETR whom I instructed on the reorganization of the work in BABYLON [San Francisco] where he is finally going to the post of deputy ship repair engineer on the West Coast. On the day of the meeting PETR had no agent network in his charge.[17]**

In a follow-on paragraph, after signatures MAJ and AKIM, the KGB cipher clerk, covername BORIS, added this sentence to the Center: "Indicate the shortcomings in my telegram."[18]

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1153, 12 August 1944, from MAJ to SEMEN. Here MAJ sets out what the Embassy has agreed to do to help deal with the merchant seamen problem. Note the reference again to Moscow's telegram No. 20, but this time we read that Comrade PETROV had signed that message. PETROV may be Beria, head of the entire state security apparatus.

**On the 7th of August I came to an agreement with [Ambassador Gromyko's] deputy on the matter of Comrade PETROV's telegram No. 20. He promised to give immediate instructions to the Consul General in [San Francisco] to leave on a long trip to SEATTLE and PORTLAND for the purpose of acquainting himself in detail with the position of Soviet seamen, the provision of cultural and medical facilities for them, ascertaining the causes of desertion and taking steps in the consular line to prevent seamen deserting. The consul is also being commissioned:**

**1. To carry out meetings in these ports with [1 group unrecovered] if necessary [2 groups unrecovered] representatives of the port authorities in order to establish good-neighborly relations with a view to their cooperating in the apprehension and return of seamen in case of desertion.**

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[15] "Roof" is also translated as cover — this is a specialized tradecraft term.

[16] VOVChEK was the covername for (probably) Aleksandr Pavlovich BOChEK.

[17] Covername PETR= Aleksandr Petrovich GRAChEV, a KGB officer. He would later complain that his cover made it impossible to carry out his KGB functions (V.'s problem too).

[18] BORIS = Alexander Pavlovich Saprykin.

**2. On board the ships personally and through party organizers to give talks to seamen on the theme of guarding vessels in foreign ports, heightening vigilance and military discipline for [3 groups unrecovered] deserters...**

**[several phrases excluded, rlb]**

MAJ closes with, "Please sanction drawing up an appropriate questionnaire." — probably to be used in meeting with seamen.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1200, 23 August 1944, from MAJ to; SEMEN. This contains two standard items: a report from one informant; a proposal to sign up a new informant:

**According to a report of the probationer [agent] MORYaK Petty Officer Class II TKAChENKO, G.N., who left for the USSR on 15 July among personnel of a group of ships, talked in MIAMI with a Russian-American woman about the causes of the war. This American woman [33 groups unrecoverable]**

**Please sanction AKIM's taking on Technical Lieutenant MARTYNENKO Stepan Filippovich, henceforth "ELEMENT" who is working in [New York City]. In the past he worked in the southern group. We intend using him for investigation contacts of Soviet naval seamen and technical staff passing through or working in [New York City].**[19]

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1206, 23 August 1944, from MAJ to SEMEN, the last example of this type calls attention to an informant who had not been given a cover name though he had been helping the KGB:

**Please sanction bringing to our work MAMLYGA, Vitalij Semenovich (henceforth EMA), a ship loading inspector in [New York City], former assistant political director of the SS BUDENNYJ. EMA is being used by us in the party line on surveillance of people employed in loading ships, has made a favorable showing of himself. In a telegram from VIKTOR of 12th May 1944 we were advised that EMA is not included in a net. At the same time please sanction handing over to his charge the coastal probationer PATRIARCH who is being used on processing firms [3 groups unrecovered].**[20]

Physical and Technical Security and Use of Weapons

Two interesting messages that pertain come from rare publication of Trade [redacted] messages.[21] In No. 8166, 29 December 1942, Washington —> Moscow, to Mikoyan, we have this dramatic opening: "In the last part of December there have been two cases of safe-cracking in our annex". Later that day, in numbers 8167 and 8168, the Trade group in Washington sent a very long message describing safes left open or documents not locked up. Though most of this message seems to have been recovered, the sense of what is going on cannot

[19] The Russian term translated as "investigation" is in this instance "oformlenie". The various translations of the "oform.." words are important to the Venona story. This KGB tradecraft term of art has various meanings such as: (especially) process, grant clearance, vett, investigate, cultivate etc.

[20] This message was one of Meredith Gardner's earliest translations (I have used a re-issue of 1954) and helped to show how both true name and covemame might appear in a message. Gardner had rendered EMA as EM. Note that the translation "processing" is used here for the aforementioned "oformlenie".

[21] Trade [redacted] messages were worked by the Venona party for matching purposes and cribs — as the means for getting into the intelligence service messages. Trade messages themselves had little intelligence value and were only published when the rare interesting item, as in this case, was present.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

be. An internal investigation is in progress, with statements being taken and a culprit identified (Comrade Minakov) — but it's all too hard to sort out, except for the admonition given to Minakov by one Logachev:

> **Just why are you keeping it [the document apparently, rlb] here? You do know that you may not keep such things here because in doing so you may compromise not only yourself and the Secret and Cipher Division but also the Soviet Union.**

Minakov replied, "I know all that and nobody has to teach me".

A circular of 2 December 1943, from covername PETROV (Beria) in Moscow to the KGB Residents (No. 232, 233) gives us a detailed account of KGB policy on security in the Residency offices.[22] Quoted in full:

> **Once again we direct your attention to the insufficient secrecy in the work of the leaders and operational workers of the residencies. Some operational workers are being initiated into affairs of the residencies which have no relation to the work which they are carrying out. Of course this is the result of talkativeness and the inevitable responses of brotherly relations which are maintained among our workers. It is necessary to all [6 groups unrecovered] but each individual operational worker should know on the general work of the residency only what is necessary in order to carry out the work on his own assignment. In the premises of the embassy, legation, consulate (in the studies and work rooms of the residents) and in the private apartments, probably fitted with special [1 group unidentified], discussions are being conducted on operational questions. There have even been cases of setting up in the work room a conference of all the workers of the residency for a collective discussion of instructions of the center. It is categorically forbidden during instruction and generally in discussion, particularly within the premises, to use the real surnames of workers and probationers [agents], names of cities and countries, officials and other objectives. All this should be encoded.**
>
> **[1 group unrecovered] considering the cases cited above it is recommended instead of conversations aloud to exchange notes, which immediately after such a 'secret conversation' [1 group unidentified] are destroyed. Our workers must not at work and in private life [4 groups unrecovered] from other [1 group unidentified] apparatus and [1 group unrecovered] that it will inevitably lead to disclosure. [1 group unidentified] other [1 group unrecovered] discussions in Russian about [5 groups unrecovered and 5 groups unrecoverable] violation of rules of secrecy we will take strict measures. [1 group unidentified] providing the necessary secrecy in our work to a considerable extent depends upon the leaders of the residencies themselves. The residents should not share with their subordinates communications which they are not supposed to know for the work.**

In summary then, the problems of need-to-know and the threat of electronic eavesdropping. One would like to know more, however, about the Resident(s) who used the unexpected technique of the staff meeting and perhaps brain storming to discuss the instructions of the Center.

Moscow issued a specific warning about eavesdropping a few months later in a circular of 1 May 1944 (Moscow external number 261 to Mexico City, internal No. 1799 for all) to, at least, the Residents in Mexico

[22] This message went to, at least, New York, Canberra, Havana, Mexico City, Ottawa, San Francisco.

City, New York, Washington, San Francisco and Ottawa.[23] Though the message is poorly recovered, the sense is plain:

> **[1 group unrecovered] it became known to us that the COMPETITORS are making wide use of eavesdropping devices in our Soviet institutions.**
>
> **[20 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **warning henceforth in the event of conversation in buildings of the institutions, in private apartments and in other premises which can**
>
> **[20 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **institutions.**

MAJ replied to the Center the same day (NY —> Moscow, No. 595, 1 May 1944) explaining the security countermeasures steps he had taken:

> **Your number 1799.**
>
> **1. Concerning measures for ensuring the maximum degree of security among our workers [3 groups unrecovered] by a note which I am preparing in conformity with [1 group unrecovered].**
>
> **2. On the basis of your telegram I shall once more brief the workers of the OFFICE.**
>
> **3. Conversations between our workers about our work inside the PLANT building I have allowed only on the premises of the OFFICE where there is no telephone with the stipulation that the wireless be switched on and that they do no talk loudly.**
>
> **4. I shall not let DEDUShKA allude**
>
> **[19 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **is losing [his?] previous bad habits.**

MAJ means to warn his officers (workers) in writing but in the next paragraph he says he will also brief them. In paragraph 3, MAJ says he will allow KGB officers at the Consulate (the PLANT) in NYC to have discussions only within the Residency spaces of that building (the OFFICE). MAJ will apparently brief or warn DEDUShKA (which means grandfather, the cover name for Consul General Kiselev).

Next, MAJ has to deal with the problem of the cleaning force in a compartmented area (the Secret Cipher Office):[24]

> **In view of the departure of the former cleaner will you allow the cleaning to be done by a new girl Anya Korenkova who will only see BORIS here in his capacity as a worker in the Secret Cipher Office. Should your sanction this we will pay her 15 a month. If you object the cleaning will have to be entrusted to a permanent staff member of the OFFICE [i.e. a KGB officer in the Residency, rlb]. Telegraph your reply.**

Three days later, on 25 July 1944, MAJ described a probable attempt by the FBI to gain access to the

[23] The reader will recall that 1 May 1944 was a big day in the history of Venona — see Chapter III.

[24] NY —> Moscow, No. 1029, 22 July 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR.

Consulate, and he asked some tough questions (unfortunately we do not have Moscow's answers):[25]

> **Yesterday two fellows came to see SHAH at the PLANT and said that in the capacity of representatives of the City Housing Department they were to inspect the PLANT building and the neighboring house. In reply to SHAH's question about the purpose of the inspection the fellows said that they were not obligated to say. SHAH managed to show them out but they hinted roughly that they might come back with people who would ensure them access. DEDUShKA [3 groups unrecovered] [8 groups unrecoverable] plausible excuse the necessity of checking the lift mechanism (it is very bad). DEDUShKA came to an agreement that he would send our architect to the Housing Department and he would inform them about the lifts. With this the incident was closed, but it is difficult to doubt that the fellows represented the KhATA [the FBI].**
>
> **BORIS has no special instructions on the circumstances in which he is to destroy the ciphers without reference to anyone and when it is permissible to use weapons. Please give some guidance. [emphasis added, rlb]**

One specific NY reference to technical security countermeasures (TSCM) is in NY —> Moscow, No. 1824, 27 December 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR (this contains two internal messages, the second, No. 995 concerns TSCM):

> **NESTOR has carried out preventive measures on the insulation of the office against eavesdropping from without. In a day or two he will start similar work in the NEIGHBORS [GRU's] premises which he will finish in the course of four days, after which he considers it necessary to leave for the ISLAND [the UK]. Telegraph instructions.**[26]

"MARGARITA's Unbalanced Condition"

From Venona, we learn rather little about the secret work of KGB agent covername MARGARITA. But we do have a detailed account of KGB New York's concern that she might go bad and betray their operations.

The Ottawa GRU code officer Igor Gouzenko (see Chapter III and elsewhere) described the joint KGB–GRU inspection visit to the North American Residencies in the summer of 1944. According to Gouzenko, the GRU representative Colonel Milshtein, traveling as Mikhail Milski, under cover as a courier, gave him some messages to encrypt for transmission to Moscow. One of these messages concerned activities in the U.S.: Milshstein reported concern over covername MARGARET — something about her behavior or lack of trustworthiness. "There was some kind of apprehension reflected in that telegram", recalled Gouzenko.[27]

We have the KGB's own words about that apprehension, in NY —> Moscow, No. 1196, 22 August 1944, to VIKTOR (no signature). The first 36 groups are unrecovered and the next 37 groups unrecoverable, after which:

---

[25] NY —> Moscow, No. 1043, 25 July 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR

[26] NESTOR (Konstantin Ivanovich KROHhIN) appears in four Canberra <—> Moscow messages of 1945.

[27] GCHQ Q/H/7668/HH47/6, 5 Sep 1960, memo with attachment from Bodsworth to Bill Cowie (UK Venona representative at NSA). The attachment is an extract from an interrogation of Gouzenko in 1954. I assume that the MARGARET case was an important issue and would have become known to both of the visiting inspectors: KGB (MARGARET's service) and GRU. Milshtein/Milsky had the communications covername KOMANDOR. The KOMANDOR traffic is identified in Venona but unreadable.

**'perfect type of fascist'. Sometimes she calls all Russians 'swine'. In response to DUGLAS's request to be more concrete MARGARITA replied that she 'loved' the USSR but hated 'the bureaucrats that are sucking the blood of innocent people like her parents.' MARGARITA also showed an unhealthy nationalism. On reading an article about German atrocities in the USSR MARGARITA remarked, 'much ado about nothing but no one bothers about the Finns murdered in Karelia.' MARGARITA is friendly with the daughter of VOSKA who is known to you. In the words of D. she is wholly under her influence and probably recounts to her dealings with us. MARGARITA is also under the influence of another Czech, Helena MATOUSEK. MARGARITA told D. that she was not going to work in the SHELTER [the UN relief organization] because Helena MATOUSEK had also refused to go there.**

**We consider that MARGARITA's unbalanced condition and hostility towards us may lead to serious consequences even including treachery. For this reason it would be desirable to cease work with her. As, in D.'s words, she is constantly expressing the wish to return to the USSR, this solution of the problem would be the most radical. It would be possible to provide a cover story [LEGENDIROVAT' in the Russian in this message, rlb] for the trip by means of a request from her wounded brother, but for this a letter from him is essential. On his return D. will see MARGARITA and say that he is going away for some weeks. If an opportunity of organizing the trip does not present itself we recommend completely dropping live contact with her after having provided appropriate cover for this step. Telegraph your opinion.**

(b)(6)
(b)(7)(C)
OGA

FBI

While MARGARITA would have been an outstanding candidate for doubling, AFSA did not read this message until 1952, at which time the FBI identified her as [redacted] born in [redacted] in the U.S. to Finnish immigrant parents. The family moved to Finland in 1933 to reside in the Karelia region. In 1935 [redacted] went to Moscow, working there for a Russian newspaper. She returned to the U.S. in May 1940, but her parents had been arrested by the Russians (perhaps in the 1939 Winter War, or they too may have moved to Moscow and been arrested there) and were not seen thereafter. She worked for the Office of the Censor from 1942–1945 and in July joined UNRRA.

Incredibly, MARGARITA [redacted] applied for a position with AFSA in 1952.[28]

Returning to MARGARITA in Venona — New York's security plan for her is in a message of 19 September 1944 (only the relevant part of the message quoted):[29]

(b)(6)
(b)(7)(C)
OGA

FBI

**As for MARGARITA on the basis of your last instructions we consider it advisable to maintain only a technical contact with her in order not to lose sight of her. For such contact we have in mind using KhAN's wife [unidentified cover name, rlb]. Please check her before the 10th October. We have entrusted IKS with the task of fixing at once a meeting between MARGARITA and the new person between 15th and 20th October. Telegraph consent.**

[28] The NSA Office of Security has no record of this. Bob Lamphere advised the Venona party in November 1952 of [redacted] application earlier that year (perhaps picked up when AFSA checked her name with the Bureau in the pre-employment process; we do not know if [redacted] was processed by AFSA, for example given a polygraph interview). See XY–68 and item 52–014 in the Venona collection.

[29] NY —> Moscow, No. 1337, 19 September 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR.

And another MARGARITA message from New York to Moscow on 6 October 1944:[30]

> **Your number 4563 [not available]. We are taking account of the contradictory nature of the information about MARGARITA's moods. In our telegrams we have indicated that according to what IKS says MARGARITA is hostile to our firm and not to the country. In reply to our asking how to explain her hostile frame of mind and her simultaneous desire to return home, IKS emphasizes her not**
>
> **[27 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **in the past was connected (apparently GLAN) and with whom in IKS opinion she was living. Now, when she meets IKS, MARGARITA talks only of her joy at the coming meeting with GLAN and has already prepared gifts for him. Please bear in mind the difficulty of getting to the bottom of an affair like this under conditions here, when there is no possibility of meeting MARGARITA personally and there are no grounds for not trusting IKS conclusions. We pass on to you quite objectively IKS information and conclusions.**

MARGARITA appears in three other Venona messages. In one, New York objects to Moscow's suggestion that covername ChERNYJ (which means BLACK) take her over.

A few comments on this case. Covernames DUGLAS and IKS (which is the letter 'X') are both agent-officer Jack Katz. While we do not read any suggestion from KGB New York that MARGARITA should be eliminated in the U.S., she kept some dangerous company in Katz. Katz told a reliable source that he had fought in the Spanish Civil War, and after he returned to the U.S., "helped prepare the murder of a well-known Communist who informed against the movement"; he directed the surveillance of Colonel Walter Krivitsky and helped set up the murder of Trotsky.[31] Had MARGARITA gone to the USSR, as she had asked, she would not likely have come back to the U.S.[32] The KGB's reference to "technical liaison" is a tradecraft term meaning to keep in touch with a source but not to have operational (espionage for example) contact with the person. The term needs to be compared to that other KGB favorite, "put in cold storage" or "put on ice".

Note also that the KGB Residency does not want to use an officer to meet personally with MARGARITA — too dangerous one would assume. In this case the KGB was quite content to continue the old tradition of using agent officer types (such as Katz) instead of exposing a regular KGB officer. Covername ChERNYJ (BLACK) was Tom Black, a long time but irregular KGB source who at the time he was proposed as MARGARITA's contact did not have any other KGB work to do. Covernames GLAN and KhAN have not been positively identified.

C. The New York Residency

During the Venona period, New York had at least four KGB Residents (chiefs of station). In terms of NSA–GCHQ Venona reporting policy, the preferred term for senior KGB officers at the Residencies is "signatories" — that is the covername(s) signing KGB messages going to the Center. That makes the picture a bit more complicated. For while the Center on several occasions chastised the Resident for allowing messages

[30] NY —> Moscow, No. 1411, 6 October 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR.

[31] The murdered well-known Communist could have been Krivitsky, or Juliet Poyntz killed by the KGB in New York in November 1937. Krivitsky was found shot to death in a Washington hotel in 1941 — also presumably a KGB murder.

[32] I'm unclear at the KGB's difficulties in getting her into the Soviet Union. [redacted] was an American citizen; perhaps the U.S. would not have allowed her to go because of her war work or various wartime policies.

to be sent without his authorization, several people other than the Resident in fact had signature authority. In other words Moscow insisted that only persons approved by the Center could sign messages — but all messages did not have to be (perhaps were not allowed to be?) signed by the Resident.

New York KGB signatories included:

The Residents

1. Covername GENNADIJ: Lt. General Gajk Badalovich Ovakimian. He is not actually a recovered signatory, as he left the U.S. in 1941 following an FBI investigation into passport fraud (which however did not uncover much of the New York apparatus). During the Venona period, the covername GENNADIJ appears in the New York traffic three times in reference to sources he had handled before his departure.

**Vassili Zubilin, KGB Resident in NYC and Washington and mass murderer (Katyn Forest). A photo from the mid-1930s.**

2. Covername MAXIM: General Vassili Mikhailovich Zubilin, aka: Zarubin. He arrived in the U.S. in late December 1941, taking Ovakimian's place, and operated under the cover of Vice Consul (as did his successors) until July 1943 when he moved to the Soviet Embassy in Washington. The Anonymous Letter of 1943 described him as head of KGB activities in the U.S. He left the U.S. on 27 August 1944. As noted earlier, Zubilin had been in charge of the Katyn Forest murders in 1940. His wife, Elizabeth (covername: VARDO), who accompanied him to the U.S. was also a senior KGB officer. The Zubilins had also operated in the U.S. as illegals during the mid–1930s.

3. Covername LUKA: Pavel Klarin. He came to the U.S. in 1939 under cover of head of the USSR agricultural section at the New York World's Fair. He subsequently became a Vice Consul and briefly replaced Zubilin as the New York Resident (July–November 1943). The writer of the Anonymous Letter of 1943 described him as Zubilin's principal assistant in the U.S. In November 1943, Klarin transferred to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City as KGB Resident there with the special mission of dealing with Trotsky's widow and trying to spring "Frank Jacson", Trotsky's murderer, from a Mexican prison.

4. Covername MAJ: Stepan Zakharovich Apresyan. He arrived in the U.S. in February 1944 and served as the New York Resident, under cover of Vice Consul, until March 1945, when he went to San Francisco to head KGB operations against the UN Conference. MAJ was only 29 years old when he took up his duties in New York — he claimed that up until then he had been a high school teacher. In fact he had received a high

decoration in 1937 for his work in the NKVD, almost certainly in the purges and mass repression of the time. Because of his ethnic background he took an overt interest in Armenians in the U.S. As we have seen, MAJ was signatory for hundreds of New York KGB messages.

Other Signatories

5. Covername SERGEJ: Vladimir Sergeevich Pravdin. He is found in the New York <—> lane of 66 times, occasionally as signatory. He came to the U.S. in October 1941, accompanied by his wife Olga who was also a KGB officer. He operated under the cover of an important position, head of the Tass News Agency in New York. In one message that he signed he reminded VIKTOR that he, Pravdin, was supposed to be on an equal footing with MAJ, perhaps as a sort of co-resident. After MAJ went to San Francisco, Pravdin may have become the Resident, at least for a time, but we cannot trace this through Venona which runs dry in mid–1945 for the New York traffic.

6. Covername ANTON: Leonid Romanovich Kvasnikov. He directed KGB collection against technical targets as head of the New York Residency's KhU Line (believed to stand for KhOZyJSTVENNOE UPRAVLENIE, the Economic Directorate).[33] He operated under AMTORG cover as an engineering specialist. He ran the atomic bomb espionage program, and is seen signing a number of messages on that subject (see the Rosenberg chapter). However, he is also signatory on messages about less sensitive technical targets.

The Illegal Resident

7. Covernames MER (MAYOR) and ALBERT: Iskhak Abdulovich Akhmerov. He is the signatory for many New York KGB messages but had no open connection to the various Soviet establishments in the U.S. In addition to the Venona communications covernames MER and ALBERT, he had the following street names or aliases:

- Bill. Elizabeth Bentley and some other KGB agents knew him only by this first name — typical of KGB tradecraft.

- William Greinke. He may have entered the U.S. in about 1937 under a false passport using this name. The real William Greinke, born in New York in 1903 died a month after his birth. However, he may have been in the U.S. before that time too. Michael Straight, an American educated at Cambridge University, where he was recruited by Anthony (later Sir Anthony) Blunt, met with Akhmerov in New York and Washington in 1937–1939, and knew him as Michael Green.

- Michael Adamec. Akhmerov re-entered the U.S. in about 1942 using this name. In August 1944, a daughter was born to "Adamec's" wife, Helen Lowry, in New York City. In hospital records Adamec gave a New York address, Chicago as his POB and said he was in the clothing business. BVS statistics in Cook County (Chicago) showed a Michael Adamec born in 1904 — but the color of the paper and the handwriting, as compared to other records, suggested the record had been inserted. The KGB had an asset working in BVS who falsified birth records. Helen Lowry, known to Elizabeth Bentley simply as Catherine (she told the FBI that her KGB superiors after the death of her lover Jacob Golos were known to her only as "Bill and Catherine") appears in Venona as covername EL'ZA (ELSA). She was born in Kansas, the niece of U.S. Communist Party chief Earl Browder.

[33] See NY —> M, No. 1071, 28 July 1944. There are other references to the KhU Directorate (e.g. in the Rosenberg messages).

*XIII. NEW YORK KGB: AGENT NETWORKS, TRADECRAFT AND SECURITY*

In March 1946, "Adamec" and Helen Lowry left New York, supposedly moving to Baltimore, but instead they probably went to Russia.[34]

References to the work of MER/ALBERT appear throughout this volume of the study, showing him as agent handler, net controller, intermediary between the Residency (both New York and Washington) and the old-fashioned agent-officer net controllers who actually believed in the Communist cause.

D. Some Problems in Running the New York Residency

The New York KGB Residency often looks like any other bureaucracy, of any ideology, and a few examples will be given in subsequent paragraphs: problems with headquarters, performance appraisals, meeting suspenses, a poorly though out organizational structure. In one example we have a remarkable disagreement between MAJ and SERGEI, with the code clerk caught in the middle, but a disagreement that raises some issues of considerable historical interest. Likewise, the historic changes in KGB doctrine on handling the agent networks can be followed in some detail (described in the next section).

SERGEJ vs. MAJ

◀ **MAJ, the KGB Resident in NYC and later in San Francisco.**

**SERGEJ. He didn't think much of MAJ's ability.** ▶

This episode can be followed in NY —> Moscow traffic of 9–11 October; Moscow's reaction has not been found in the traffic (very little Moscow —> NY traffic was broken).

On 9 October 1944, MAJ signed a message to Moscow that mentioned the activities of six KGB agents. The New York KGB code clerk, BORIS, then added the following to the message without MAJ's approval or knowledge:

> **Personal for VIKTOR**
>
> **SERGEJ is insisting on sending a telegram addressed to you, the contents of which he does not want to show to MAJ. I have an instruction of MAJ's, based on your instructions to SShOs [1 group unrecovered] not to send any telegrams without authority. Please instruct me as soon as possible as to how I am to proceed in this and similar cases.**
>
> **BORIS**

[34] Akhmerov's first wife, a Russian, was reportedly a secretary to Beria. Their son Robert also became a KGB officer. It is tempting to think that the move to Baltimore was authentic, or at least had been intended to be: there ALBERT and ELSA could have been in closer and more secure contact with Alger Hiss (see Chapter X.)

The SShO was the "secret cipher office" at each Soviet establishment.

BORIS must have changed his mind and told MAJ about this, for the next day, 10 October, MAJ sent a very long three part message to Moscow. The first 149 groups, including the addressee, of this message are unrecoverable, but the readable part of the message seems to include MAJ's summary of or quotes from a note he received from SERGEJ followed by MAJ's critique of SERGEJ's note and his performance. However, it is not entirely clear just what constitutes the note (I suspect that MAJ summarizes SERGEJ's note unless the latter speaks of himself by name). I have excluded parts of the message which are best presented in the case study chapter on the media. Covername IDE (YAZ in the Russian) is an American citizen, Simon Samuel Krafsur, who was a TASS employee and a KGB agent. MAJ's message:

> **SERGEJ has brought in IDE but is not able to direct his work systematically as he sees him too rarely. Among SERGEJ's acquaintances are persons of great interest from a legal point of view.[35] They are well informed and, although they do not say all they know, nevertheless they provide useful comments on the foreign policy of the [U.S.].**
>
> **[several sentences excluded — used later, rlb]**
>
> **Decisive results in the business of signing up valuable people can be obtained in only two ways, first by transferring SERGEJ to CARTHAGE [Washington D.C.] and secondly by making use of the FELLOW COUNTRYMEN [members of the American Communist Party]. At the moment SERGEJ is trying to get the [TASS News Agency office] transferred to CARTHAGE.**
>
> **[several sentences excluded and 35 unrecoverable groups]**
>
> **Without the help of the FELLOW COUNTRYMEN 'we are completely powerless'.**
>
> **MAJ's opinion:**
>
> **1. In his note SERGEJ has put in a nutshell his whole conception of the reasons why he has made no real advance, and his approach to the next few months. His view that without CARTHAGE and HELMSMAN [American Communist Party chairman, Earl Browder] we are doomed to vegetate is mistaken. It is not true that everything of value is in CARTHAGE and it is doubly untrue that without HELMSMAN we are 'powerless'. I consider that in either case we shall have to have recourse to the help of the FELLOW COUNTRYMEN, but they ought not to be the one and only base especially if you take into account the fact that in the event of [Thomas E. Dewey's] being elected this source may dry up.[36]**

[35] "Legal" in the sense that SERGEJ meets them, at least at times, openly, in the Line of Cover, i.e. as the senior TASS representative in the U.S. he would be expected to meet with Americans making and writing the news.

[36] I replaced Dewey's covername KULAK with his true name. One wonders the effect of this statement had the traffic been read currently in 1944 or had it even been broken out before the 1948 election. Governor Dewey had very bad luck with Sigint: during the 1944 Presidential election campaign, General Marshall, using Carter W. Clarke as his emissary, asked Dewey not to comment on Sigint during the campaign (which Dewey wanted to do as his military advisor, retired General Hugh Drum, an enemy of Marshall, told him about Japanese Purple in the context of Pearl Harbor). In 1944, neither Marshall, Clarke, Dewey or anyone else in government knew what was then passing in the Russian Diplomatic traffic. It is difficult to imagine that Truman could have won in 1948 if Venona had been sufficiently readable at the time and had been used by candidate Dewey.

**2. SERGEJ will not want to be in the Office [the KGB Residency, rlb] itself any more than now, excepting in cases when a great deal of material requiring urgent appraisement piles up.**

**3. SERGEJ ought to organize the work of the Editorial Office so as to have more time for developing existing connections and starting up new ones. He should not carry the whole Editorial Office on his own shoulders; then he could go to CARTHAGE more, which is undoubtedly important.**

**4. [one sentence excluded, rlb] SERGEJ helps me to decide operational questions connected with informational work and to brief [KGB officers and agents] on current tasks. Questions on work with probationers [agents]**

**[27 groups unrecoverable]**

**[c% cover] the best for our [c% system]. I hope that we will not have to engage in the 'theoretical' education of SERGEJ after all these years.**

**Telegraph your opinion and possible counsels.**

Of course the most interesting part of this message is MAJ's disagreement with SERGEJ about the role and future of Earl Browder and the American Communist Party in espionage. But the dispute over Washington seems curious: surely MAJ knew that, except for the atomic bomb espionage, the most important information was coming out of Washington, though through agents run by New York. I don't exactly understand MAJ's point.

The next day, 11 October, SERGEJ had his say in a message to the VIKTOR which he signed.[37] Apparently code clerk BORIS had received approval from the Center or MAJ to send the message. Quoted in full:

**Experience of the work of the OFFICE [the KGB Residency] during the six months which have elapsed since MAJ's arrival has shown that he is incapable of coping with the tasks which are set him. Your instructions giving me responsibilities equal to MAJ's can only partially make up for the shortcomings in the work. Conditions of enormous pressure of work in the line of cover; the necessity for security measures which do not allow frequent lengthy visits to the premises of the OFFICE; the great pressure of work on our permanent staff workers in the line of cover – make it impossible for me to take an adequate part in the direction of work.**[38]

**I am making every effort to assist MAJ in all matters,. However, assistance with advice and recommendations cannot make up for the lack of adequate organizational**

**[47 groups unrecovered]**

**side, meetings of fellow workers with him. In answer to my inquiry about the result of the meeting MAJ replied that he knew just as little about ALBERT's work as before the**

[37] In the first message of this series, code clerk BORIS had used the codegroup for "Personal for VIKTOR", an eyes-only type address. SERGEJ, perhaps by accident (or is it some little joke by BORIS) merely uses the regular form, "To VIKTOR", which would mean that others would have seen it before VIKTOR did.

[38] SERGEJ is not off to a good start here. His complaint that his, and his officers', work in the Line of Cover (that is, as actual TASS correspondents with a busy legal schedule) took too much time might not have gone over too well. Same for the rest of this paragraph.

**meeting with him.[39] There are many examples of this sort of thing. In a conversation with VADIM [KGB Resident in Washington, rlb] it came to light that [7 groups unrecovered] telegrams which he signs. As for people, MAJ is utterly without the knack of dealing with them, frequently showing himself excessively abrupt and inclined to nag and too rarely finding time to chat with them. Sometimes our operational workers who work in the same establishment with him cannot get an answer to an urgent question from him for several days at a time. Our permanent staff, noting MAJ's inexperience and remoteness from the details of everyday work, do not consider him an authoritative leader, which has an effect on working discipline.**

**Although since the receipt of your instructions I have formally known about [2 groups unrecovered] work of the OFFICE [2 groups unrecovered]**

**[55 groups unrecoverable**

**in fact it turns out quite differently. [3 groups unrecovered] opportunities for rendering assistance to MAJ and so as a result of inexperience and failure to understand that his appointment as leader does not signify recognition of his capability, but means that he has been given an opportunity to demonstrate his capabilities in this post, my cooperation cannot make a marked improvement in the position. The appointment as Master of the OFFICE in TYRE [i.e. NY Resident] of a worker without experience of work abroad is an experiment apparently necessitated by the absence of a qualified candidate.**

**In my opinion you must decide whether to send here some other experienced leader. MAJ will need to work under the supervision of such a permanent staff worker. Written instructions from you to MAJ cannot make up for lack of experience and knowledge. A worker who has no experience of work abroad cannot cope on his own with the work of directing the TYRE OFFICE.[40]**

Both MAJ and SERGEJ stayed at their posts.

Performance Appraisals

MAJ tried to stick up for his people and occasionally communicated quite forcefully with the Center. Several examples follow, though the first one is an exception, showing him as rather timid:

- In NY —> Moscow, No. 683, 12 May 1944, MAJ asks the Center:

  **You authorized ANTON, who is au courant with the principal matters of the OFFICE, to sign telegrams in my absence. How should the new decision be explained to him so that he should not conclude that you gave him a bad rating?[41]**

- MAJ did much better in his later performance appraisal messages, beginning with that of 28 July 1944, No. 1071, to VIKTOR where he now warmly praises ANTON and several other KGB officers:

[39] ALBERT being the illegal Resident described earlier in this chapter as a signatory. MAJ's remark is quite interesting: ALBERT's role, his standing and his day to day operations must have been confusing to the Residency.

[40] The BORIS, MAJ and SERGEJ messages are, respectively, [redacted] NY —> Moscow, No. 1433–1435, 10 October; NY —> Moscow, No. 1442, 1447, 11 October.

[41] Cover name ANTON, Leonid Kvasnikov, would again become a signatory for material from his atomic bomb and other technical intelligence nets.



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

**1. ANTON has been heading the KhU [Economic] line since March of last year. [3 groups unrecovered] not only all the responsibility, but even likes it. For the last [7 groups unrecovered] he has been taking steps to obtain valuable information.....[42] Urgently request you to:**

**1) Revise his efficiency rating.**

**2) ['also give him other recognition' — this seems to be the sense, rlb]**

**2. From the moment he came over to the KhU line KALISTRAT has become extremely active and operates in the network energetically and with interest.**

**[17 groups unrecoverable]**

**I recommend revising his efficiency rating and [5 groups unrecoverable].**

**3. Please revise ARSENIJ's efficiency rating. By his active work he has fully merited encouragement.**

**4. Notwithstanding AKIM's period of inactivity I raise the question of revising his efficiency rating and of his possible promotion. AKIM works [under] enormous pressure, persistently struggling against difficulties. It must not be forgotten that [3 groups unrecovered] he alone is giving information on the Pacific Coast of the [U.S.]. This [4 groups unrecovered] valuable material of AKIM at a time of shortage of work, which unfortunately exists.**

**5. What have you decided regarding the revision of TVEN's efficiency rating?[43]**

AKIM headed the Fifth Line: security of the Soviet merchant fleet. As seamen continued to desert in U.S. ports, and Beria began to take an interest in this problem, AKIM collapsed and, in a message to SEMEN on 20 November 1944, No. 1622, MAJ reported:[44]

**A few days ago AKIM had a severe heart attack which**

**[20 groups unrecovered]**

**severe nervous overstrain which has produced a fall in cardiac activity, a severe lowering of blood pressure and attacks of vertigo. The doctor considers a two months' rest with treatment the absolute minimum necessary to avoid complications.**

**In connection with this incident we may remark that a similar attack has already occurred in another town while AKIM was there on business. AKIM also suffers from a stomach complaint. We emphasize that the vague reaction of the Center to A's repeated requests and proposals for filling personnel vacancies in the Fifth Line and in general for improving the work, the absence of profound appreciation of his work so far, which is evidently to be explained by an inadequate conception of the colossal difficulties of his work, have always**

[42] The next sentence is omitted, as it is poorly recovered and the sense is lost.

[43] KGB officers mentioned in this message are as follows: KALISTRAT = Aleksandr Semenovich Fomin; ARSENIJ = Andrej Ivanovich ShEVChENKO; AKIM = Sergej Lukyanov. ARSENIJ ran a very successful espionage/tech transfer operation at Bell Aircraft in Buffalo, where he worked as a member of the Soviet Government Purchasing Commission.

[44] As noted earlier, SEMEN headed a directorate or department at the Center concerned with the merchant fleet and port security etc.

**been hard for A. to bear and have undoubtedly helped to pave the way for his illness, bearing in mind the enormous pressure at which he works. To restore his health, which is in real danger, I urgently plead that he be granted two weeks leave within the next few days. Furthermore I consider it essential that there should be sent a thorough-going appreciation of his work from the moment of his arrival in the [U.S.], not merely enumerating his mistakes and failures**

**[32 groups unrecoverable]**

**neither the strength nor health to cope with his difficult sector.**[45]

On 29 July 1944 in NY —> Moscow No. 1076, MAJ gave mixed comments on several of his officers but noted mitigating circumstances. He reported that covername ARTEK had run agents of the Second Line (which worked Ukrainian and other Soviet minority groups) but, "He did not display any particular initiative." Furthermore "He has a poor command of the language", but, "His miserable cover (messenger-guard) actually stopped him, in the conditions obtaining here, for doubling for the inspectors [?]" MAJ continued:

**With a different cover he could have acted with greater initiative and more effectively. Perhaps he is experiencing a feeling of dissatisfaction since, according to what he says, he has not been able to show his worth for many years because of his cover and [8 groups unrecovered] he stops opening doors on an equal footing with two others who are capable of nothing else.**

In this same message MAJ comments on LEONID, whose hand-writing analysis and photographic work was described earlier in this chapter. The paragraph on LEONID gives some excellent information on Lines, cover and officer qualifications:

**LEONID, before MAKSIM was given cover, was in touch with ZVUK and a number of agents of the Second Line.**[46] **Not having operational experience, he was not able to run agents in accordance with the requirements. He is qualified in the 'A' technique and successfully carried out a number of crucial tasks connected with documents on receiving and dispatching people. He has carried out missions consisting of checking and observing workers. He was used for tailing immediately upon MAKSIM's arrival. He acquired experience in external surveillance.**[47]

But, assuming he is still talking about LEONID — for many groups are missing — MAJ concludes that he didn't try to improve himself, "was off-hand and rude, conducted [1 group unrecovered] 'independently'. He was needlessly frank with his wife about matters concerning our work...."

[45] The next day in NY —> Moscow, No. 1638, 21 November 1944, MAJ continued on this theme, now pleading the case of AKIM's wife who had told a KGB officer that perhaps she should return to the USSR as one of her brothers had been killed, and a second was MIA after having been wounded 3 times; her mother was old and unable to work. MAJ asked SEMEN to visit the mother, improve her living conditions, and to take steps to be sure that care packages and mail from NY reached her.

[46] MAKSIM succeeded a Resident who had only semi-official cover with AMTORG, and the succession probably awaited getting him (MAKSIM) in as an Vice Consul, a safe cover with diplomatic status. In the meantime, LEONID worked directly with ZVUK (SOUND), who was Jacob Golos and an agent-officer type operating under non-official cover.

[47] LEONID, therefore, was a combination technical and security officer: document forgery, handwriting analysis, photography, surveillance.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36



On 17 August 1944, MAJ sent VIKTOR positive appraisals of two officers returning to the USSR. Some extracts:[48]

> **On 15 August GRIMM and KATYa left here for home. I am giving you a characterization: GRIMM is an exceptionally conscientious and hard-working person....he enjoyed the esteem of all workers. For his many years of devoted work I beg you to consider the question of his reward.**
>
> **KATYa is characterized in essence by the same qualities...she learned the language well and excellently adapted herself to the local setting. She fulfilled the duties not only of a technical worker of the office but also as a qualified communications worker, working legibly without bungles.**

MAJ had a number of complaints or counter-complaints for the Center during 1944. In a message to BORISOV (Lt. General Ivan G. ShEVELEV, head of the KGB cryptographic directorate) he said he could not check the Center's message numbers at the cable company offices and that since the teletype hookup had been installed [redacted] "your telegrams had started to go missing" with delays in receipt up to 9 days. On 14 September in a Personal to VIKTOR message, MAJ lambasted the Center for causing the, "tremendous difficulty in particular with the unprecedented detachment of one after another of the eight cadre men". He then fed back some of the Center's rude remarks to him: "the most complete helplessness" and "Is there any hope that you will straighten out our work?". Said MAJ:

> **Are such pin pricks really calculated to facilitate our work? We make blunders or now and then send a superfluous inquiry, but why can't one indicate this in a business-like way without [3 groups missing]?**

A few days later, MAJ continued with this aggressive approach in NY —> Moscow, No. 1332, 18 September 1944. The Center had complained about his delays in answering their telegrams and letters. In reply to one set of complaints about events of early 1944 he pointed out that certain things had not been done more quickly because of the close surveillance of ANTON and of the Consulate, and furthermore there had been no Resident at the time. Then he fights the battle of dates and references with the same (I have not quoted the entire message):

> **Despite the holding up of information at various moments of the work it cannot be said that there has been no information at all. In 1943 the information was regular. In 1944 also, but see nos. 1, 5, and parts of others; all the questions put to us could not be answered as your letter no. 5 was received a few days before our letter no. 7 went off and letter no. 6 has not yet been received.**

[48] NY —> Moscow, No. 1173, 17 August 1944.

> **By telegrams: Your number 2962 could not be carried out because of surveillance on TVEN. BERG who was in liaison with SMART was without liaison with us....There has been a report on MORYaK's absence (see also our number 701). Your number 3554. The money was received by MAKSIM. ANTON has had nothing to do with this matter. Your telegram number 3338. Refer to our numbers 550 and 711.**[49]

If the Center hadn't given up by then, MAJ concluded with this:

> **The task was passed on through IKS. The task is being protracted by the reason of the subsequent absence from TYRE of IKS on a trip to the West, EKhO on leave, at present FLOKS is absent, has left with her husband for RAMZAJ's area. Ekho cannot meet FLOKS until her return in only about three weeks' time.**[50]

MAJ also cited a surprising shortcoming in the Center's control of the code and cipher section in New York. It seems the Consul General had rejected KGB officer ALEKSEJ (Anatolij Antonovich YaKOVLEV) for a cover position. MAJ continued:

> **Once you gave notice that by decision of the leadership I was to name the manager of the S.C.S. [Secret Cipher Section] and that you would advise me of the terms in a supplement. Up to now there have been no terms although the manager of the S.C.S. has changed. Don't you think that having such a connection we could sometimes be interested in what [the Consul General] is communicating to the [Foreign Affairs Ministry] about our workers?**

Obviously, MAJ was well regarded by the Center, as his posting to New York was followed by the assignment to head operations against the UN Conference in San Francisco, one of the KGB's highest priority targets in 1945. He and his wife also received decorations, as acknowledged in MAJ's 10 February 1945 message to the Center: "ZOYA and I express sincere gratitude to our government for the high award it has bestowed up on us..."[51]

E. The Agent Networks

The Venona material, both the decrypts and traffic analysis for the unreadable periods, shows two general trends in the history of the Russian intelligence services' operations against the U.S. : first, the greater importance of the GRU during the earlier period and the subsequent reversal of this with the KGB becoming the more important service; and second, the evolution of the agent networks, from control by American Communist Party operatives, who I sometimes call agent-officers, to more direct control by regular KGB officers, whether illegals or persons operating under official cover. The second trend can readily be followed through the Venona decrypts and some excellent examples will be given below. The first trend, however, is mainly implied by traffic counts, because in the earlier period, when the shift took place, all KGB and GRU traffic is unreadable.

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[49] MAJ is citing the internal rather than the external numbers. I use the external numbers for consistency (they are always available while internal numbers were not always recovered) and as the preferred means of reference. In another message to the Center, MAJ asked VIKTOR to instruct the officers at the Center to read his (MAJ's) messages more carefully.

[50] This section relates to atomic bomb espionage — probably in Chicago.

[51] NY —> Moscow, No. 202, 10 February 1945.

*XIII. NEW YORK KGB: AGENT NETWORKS, TRADECRAFT AND SECURITY*

Throughout this section, and in many parts of this study, I use the 107 page statement that Elizabeth Bentley gave to the FBI on 30 November 1945. Bentley herself is prominent in Venona and much of the information she told the Bureau appears in the decrypts[52].

Trends 1939–1942: Comparison of Traffic

The activities of the COMINTERN during the later 1930s and into the 1940s have relatively little bearing on the U.S. Venona story. Especially in the European, but also in the Latin American and Asian context, we read a great deal about COMINTERN agents and operations, as distinct from the KGB or GRU. In the Sigint context, the MASK traffic — COMINTERN communications collected by the UK from 1930–1937 — does show Communist Party comings and goings and the existence of COMINTERN agents. In the U.S. Venona experience, however, we only have record traffic of the regular intelligence services.[53] The activities of the COMINTERN are therefore not a part of this story except that many agents of the KGB, operating under Communist Party net controllers, undoubtedly wanted to serve international, revolutionary communism and would have seen themselves in a COMINTERN context. However, they were under KGB or GRU control or in networks that ultimately reported to the KGB or GRU.[54]

The Venona record shows changing trends, but for the early period does not explain them, as the traffic is unreadable. As shown earlier, U.S. intercept coverage, until 1943, was incomplete. But what was collected should be a valid sampling.

For 1939, we have NY —> Moscow traffic for October–December: 69 GRU messages, but only 33 KGB.

For 1940, we have enough NY —> Moscow traffic to make a possible projection of the total: 992 GRU messages, but only 335 KGB.[55]

For 1941, the situation has reversed, leading to the assumption that Soviet intelligence organization and doctrine, at least for the U.S. target, had changed, and here we project 721 KGB messages, and 282 GRU. That remains the same for the rest of the NY —> Moscow Venona period, with the KGB showing far more traffic activity:

| | KGB | GRU |
|---|---|---|
| 1942 (projected) | 1277 | 311 |
| 1943 (actual) | 1356 | 265 |
| 1944 (actual) | 860 | 323 |
| 1945 (actual) | 1199 | 281 |

So these dates and numbers, showing the switch from GRU to KGB dominance, may indicate the timing of some transfers of affiliation that are known to have taken place by 1943 or 1944 but could not be dated, e.g.,

[52] Her book, Out of Bondage is a generally reliable re-telling of much of the material in her statement. But her original statement and the reports of later FBI interviews (such as for Lauchlin Currie's code-breaking information: see Chapter III of this study) are probably preferable sources.

[53] Actually, a few U.S. <—> Moscow COMINTERN messages were taken by the UK. It is also possible that the MASK traffic merely represents a variant of GRU (especially) and KGB communications — national party leaders, such as Browder in the U.S., were Russian intelligence agents anyway.

[54] We only need to look at the experience of Whittaker Chambers in the heyday of the Communist Party in the U.S. — his net of American Communists in government (Hiss et al) was under the direction of professional Red Army intelligence officers.

[55] Projections are based on the total number of Russian Diplomatic messages known to have been sent (Consular+KGB+GRU), and the total numbers of KGB and GRU messages actually copied. For now the GRU–naval is ignored. Complete statistics are in the traffic appendix; see also Chapter IX. and the other Residency chapters and the chapters on the GRU (both Red Army and naval).

Harry White was GRU into the late 1930s; as shown in Venona, he was KGB in 1944 and 1945. Maybe he was transferred in 1941. In Europe some important transfers, of officers at least, had taken place much earlier: senior GRU officers Walter Krivitsky and Ignace Reiss were transferred to the KGB in 1937.[56]

Comparison of KGB and GRU traffic on the Washington —> Moscow lane does not tell much about interservice trends: the Washington KGB did not directly communicate with the Center until 1943 (NYC handled their messages); the Washington GRU, at least from what we can tell from the small number of readable messages, mostly communicated attache (as opposed to agent-derived) information. However, from 1942–1945, Washington GRU sent about 4000 messages, and there are only 50 Venona translations, mostly from 1943: we may have no idea at all what we are missing.

## Lines and Networks

KGB officers assigned to the Soviet establishments in the U.S. belonged to a variety of Lines, the term used by the KGB to define their operations and cover groupings and for organizational placement and control of the officers. The Venona material doesn't give the identification or definition of all the Lines, but does give enough to understand the KGB concept — sufficient for our purposes.[57]

A KGB officer would have to operate in two Lines, sometimes more:

1. The Line of Cover: the institutional and personal cover of the officer. KGB NY officers would have been under the official Line of Cover of, principally, the Consulate, TASS News Agency or AMTORG/Soviet Government Purchasing Commission. A typical formula in the Venona messages is for the Signatory to report to the Center that he or a subordinate will approach someone — whether for spotting and assessing, information collection or internal security purposes — "in the Line of Cover".

2. The Operational Line: the actual KGB assignment of the officer that may define his or her target. Some of the Lines known from Venona included:

- The Second Line: infiltration of nationality or minority groups of interest to the Soviet state, such as Ukrainians, Roumanians, Lithuanians.
- The Fifth Line: security of the Soviet merchant fleet, port security.
- The White Line: White Russians (though possibly foreign journalists).
- Technical Line "A": document forgery and other technical measures (as opposed to technical targets, for which see KhU Line, below).
- The Internal Line: security of the Residency and Soviet missions abroad.
- The KhU (Economic) Line: the title was perhaps a carryover for the industrial espionage emphasis of the 1930s. In the U.S. at least the KhU Line was concerned with atomic bomb and other high tech espionage. In NY —> Moscow, No. 1492, 20 October 1944, to VIKTOR, signed by both MAJ and ANTON we read:

> **Your number 4748 concerning the assignment of an independent office to KhU we have noted and will comply.**

[56] The ups and downs of the GRU and KGB probably reflected the KGB's principal pre-occupation with conducting internal terror and the preserving the Soviet regime. The decline of the GRU could have been a result of the purges of the Red Army. Or Beria may have wanted more control of foreign intelligence and had the power (in relation to the Red Army) to get what he wanted.

[57] Geoffrey Sudbury set up a tradecraft terminology card file that included information on the Lines — so far we have not been able to find that index.

• The Communist Party Line: for liaison between the American Communist Party and the KGB. A separate KGB "Party Line" existed for the Soviet Communist Party cadres.

Other Lines targeted the Trotskyites, and Zionists. I'm not clear what Line targeted the various agencies of the U.S. government (other than the atomic bomb project) — however, note that some Lines are concerned with targets, others with the means or assets to carry out work. Most of these Lines were under the Resident and thus the First Chief Directorate. The Fifth Line, as we have seen, reported to the Resident who in turn sometimes reported on Fifth Line activities to SEMEN instead of VIKTOR (but that doesn't necessarily mean that the former was independent of the latter).

Some of the most important KGB personnel terms seen throughout the Venona traffic include:

• Probationer: a KGB agent working under a net controller; the latter might be an officer or another agent (especially an agent-officer type). However, the KGB occasionally uses the term Probationer for a person who is clearly a KGB officer. Mr. Shawn Massey points out that KGB officers, assigned under official cover, but not the principal Residency cover, would often have been handled like agents. In other words, a KGB officer assigned to the Soviet Government Purchasing Commission, traveling about to arrange the purchase of equipment, might be called a Probationer. A large number of probationers fell into another category, however: Russians in the U.S. in an official capacity who were used for internal security (informants) or were otherwise co-opted by the KGB to carry out various collection or other tasks.

• Worker: a KGB officer, especially of the Residency.

• Leader or Group Leader: a network or sub-net controller; might be an agent or an officer.

Well into 1944, many of the networks were run by agent group leaders, that is American communists. These network leaders reported directly, or through other agents, to a KGB controller. While networks, some or all of whose members knew each other, were particularly prominent, some agents were run individually outside the networks. Jones O. York, the longtime KGB agent inside the West Coast aircraft industry, probably worked as an individual spy, though he was handled by then typical means: by an American agent of the KGB. York, a rarity, was neither a member of the Communist Party nor a Marxist, but was in it for the money.

The control of these networks tended to become quite elaborate, especially when the illegal ALBERT was inserted into the system in a major effort to bring the Silvermaster and other traditional groups under more direct KGB control. A few points and names for reference:

• The KGB affiliates may be divided into:

  • Agents
  • Agent-Officers
  • Officers
  • Illegals (who are also Officers)

• Jacob Golos (covername: SOUND; ZVUK in Russian) was the principal connection between the Silvermaster group and the New York KGB Residency from at least 1941 until his death in late November 1943. Golos may be considered an agent-officer type; Bentley reported that he held KGB credentials. Golos, an American citizen operated under the cover of a travel agency and a shipping company.

• During that time Elizabeth Bentley (covername: GOOD GIRL) served as his principal courier, New York <—> Washington, and as an agent handler. That is, she delivered material from the Silvermaster network to Golos, but she also ran agents herself, notably Major Duncan C. Lee of the OSS.

• Julius Rosenberg (covernames ANTENNA and LIBERAL) ran a network operating against technical targets. He had originally been recruited by or through Golos and run by another intermediary (not Bentley). During the Venona period Rosenberg reported directly to KGB officers of the KhU Line.

• Gregory Silvermaster (covernames PEL and ROBERT) like Rosenberg for a time, but unlike Bentley and Golos, held various government positions and had personal access to classified information, as did the members of his network. Silvermaster was a veteran of the Communist movement and took great pride in controlling his own network. He resented direct intervention by the KGB in meeting his agents or telling him how to operate.

• Jack Katz (covernames STUKACACh, DUGLAS and IKS) was also in the agent-officer category. He succeeded Golos as a link to KGB Residency: he supervised Bentley, some networks and individual agents. He had a considerable professional background (in conspiratorial work for the KGB, that is) and, like Silvermaster, somewhat resented the new KGB officers sent to the U.S. to more directly run things.

• The illegal, covernames MER and ALBERT returned to the U.S. in 1942, and he first appears in Venona traffic of 1943. Much of this chapter concerns his work in linking the Residency to Bentley, Katz and the agent networks, including Silvermaster's and the so-called Perlo group.

The next several sections present several aspects of network administration, control and operations, mostly from messages of 1944 and 1945. Succeeding chapters will have good examples from 1942 and 1943 (e.g. the chapters on the OSS and the White House). These sections of course do not cover all the networks.

F. "We propose handing over..." : Network Control and Operations

Many KGB messages concern network control and the assignment and re-assignment of officers who would handle nets or individual agents. These messages often use the phrase "hand over" as one KGB officer's agent assets are passed to another officer. Such messages were important to the U.S. from a counterintelligence standpoint, though an individual message of this type often would not show what the agents were actually doing. Some examples of "handing over" and other aspects of network control, all NY —> Moscow, from MAJ to VIKTOR:

> **In accordance with my instructions STOCK has handed over to NAZAR, CAVALRYMAN and ABRAM together with other sources.... DAShA has been handed over preliminarily to SULLEN.**
>
> **LINA is in contact with ROMAN and ASTER. We propose handing both over to SULLEN. Telegraph your decision**
>
> **Inasmuch as after the departure of STOCK and LINA and also after the scheduled appointment of ALEKSEJ to SHAH's post in the PLANT three covers will be left vacant, please have these vacancies kept for our firm.**[58]

The foregoing message (10 August 1944) means that KGB officer STOCK (Mikhail A. Shalyapin) was leaving the New York Residency and had handed KGB agents Jack Soble (ABRAM) and Sergei Kournakoff

[58] NY —> Moscow, No. 1146, 10 August 1944

(CAVALRYMAN) to a new KGB controller, NAZAR (Stepan Shundenko). KGB officer LINA was also leaving and, with the approval of the Center, would pass her agents, Dr. Robert Soble (ROMAN) and the unidentified ASTER, to KGB officer SULLEN (possibly Viktor Kirillov). But one of the aforementioned agents, CAVALRYMAN, was himself handling an agent, DAShA (Maria Wicher, aka: Mrs. Enos Regnet Wicher; Mrs. William A. Wovschin). Note also the reference to the "three covers" that would be left vacant — MAJ wants the Center to be sure that these three billets at the Consulate, heretofore KGB positions, are kept by the Residency (and not turned back to the clean diplomats).

Another message concerning these departing officers tells a good deal about the Lines and cover.[59] Quoted in full:

> **In connection with the forthcoming departure of STOCK, LINA and SHAH for home please:**
>
> **1. Permit the internal line to be handed over to NAZAR (conjointly with the second line) from ALEKSEJ who is to replace SHAH and at one and the same time carry on the work of his line and photography.**
>
> **2. As quickly as possible send a photographer to the PLANT [Consulate] (in STOCK's post or in that of a probationer). We consider that suspicions will not be aroused by a person of this sort and for the Office it would be an invaluable help and would relieve ALEKSEJ for more effective operational work.[60]**
>
> **3. Advise whether I may count on JULIA as [1 group unrecovered] after the departure of KATYa and LINA we shall be left completely without a typist.**

An interesting last paragraph — covername JULIA, who was Olga Valentinova Klopkova, was a most valuable KGB operative (almost certainly an officer) who went into the field on sensitive assignments. But the Residency especially needed her at this time because she could type! In paragraph 2, MAJ suggests the Center send someone who is overtly a photographer — it would be appropriate to the open mission of the Consulate.

A message of 7 June 1944, concerns a number of management and control issues, but only 3 of 15 agent or officer covernames have been identified.[61] We get a sense of the Residency's extensive reporting to the Center to explain their deployments, evaluate their agent assets and seek approval or guidance. A few extracts from that message:

> **SHAH has no opportunities for investigating PODRUGA [GIRLFRIEND]; we suggest not making contact.**
>
> **BOETS [FIGHTER] can give only sporadic reviews in the Second Line, may be handed over to ZELIMKhHAN.**
>
> **ATAMAN – First and Second Lines – to be handed over to ZELIMHhAN.**
>
> **FAKIR should be fixed up on the magazine of RULEVOJ [HELMSMAN — Earl Browder]**
>
> **GUDZON [HUDSON] – we are using his connections for shedding light on leads in the First Line.**

[59] NY —> Moscow, No. 1137, 8 August 1944

[60] He went to work for ANTON on atomic bomb espionage — the Center would later be very critical of his work.

[61] NY —> Moscow, No. 823, 7 June 1944.

Second Line matters (minorities, Soviet nationalities, Eastern European countries) involved a lot of KGB officers and agents. Results were mixed. At the highest level, in the sense of international affairs, Maclean provided complete coverage as to the US–UK position on the Polish lands and competing governments. The Second Line looked at the local emigre scene as well as international reporting. Some of their assets as reported to Moscow by the NY Residency on 16 June 1944; much of this message not recovered:[62]

> **....PLUCKY sheds light on the Bessarabians; one can continue liaison with him.**
>
> **....MAShA is the only, though not very valuable, partner on the Roumanians; one should meet her more rarely but continue liaison because of KhUK [HOOK].**
>
> **YuR, BEAM, MAShA and ARROW [STRELA], who is the only partner on the Carpatho–Russians, could be turned over to ZELIMKhAN or to one or two of the TEN. Telegraph your decision.**
>
> **To the [1 group garbled] on KhU I shall hand over 20 of our workers on the fifth line after the arrival of AKIM.**
>
> **[MAJ concludes with some complaints about the way MAXIM ran the Residency and then says that he will telegraph changes in the nets in accordance with the Center's instructions, rlb]**

MAShA and KhUK were mother and son, the latter then serving in the U.S. Army: the KGB thought that KhUK had some long term potential and offered to pay his college expenses when he got out of the Army (sort of a super GI bill). Note also that THE TEN, a group of KGB co-optees/agents at Columbia University are considered potential handlers.

On 1 August 1944, MAJ sent Moscow a "tentative list" of U.S.–based Poles who either supported "complicity with the USSR" or were opponents.[63] Covername KANUK [Roman Moczulski, Director of the Polish Telegraph Agency in NYC] prepared the list. This message only lists the Soviet supporters: 16 true names are given, three of whom are described as "regular intelligence workers" (in other words their covernames aren't used).

## ARSENIJ's Transfer: the KGB in Buffalo

KGB officer Andrej I. Shevchenko, covername ARSENIJ operated under cover of the Soviet Government Purchasing Commission (SGPC) as an aircraft specialist and their senior (legal) representative at Bell Aircraft Corporation in Buffalo, NY. The KGB had significant representation in the SGPC; see for example NY —> Moscow, No. 959, 8 July 1942 that lists their people by covername and legal cover assignment e.g.:[64]

> **Power Department: VOLT**
>
> **Metals Department: DISK**
>
> **Aviation Department: BLERIOT, BORIS, ATOM, and ARSENIJ**

[62] NY —> Moscow, No. 864, 16 June 1944

[63] NY —> Moscow, Nos. 1097, 1098, 1 August 1944.

[64] MAKSIM (General Zubilin) is signatory for this message. He also reported that the Residency did not have their people in several SGPC departments such as Foodstuffs.

BLERIOT, one of ARSENIJ's colleagues in the Aviation Department of the SGPC, was KGB Colonel Stanislau Shumovsky, who had recruited Jones O. York, who was later handled by Bill Weisband. This message refers to these KGB officers as Probationers (see my discussion of this point).[65]

Three net control and administration messages that concern ARSENIJ's proposed transfer reveal a lot about his activities and KGB hand-over procedures. In the first message of this set MAJ again shows some initiative and challenges the Center:

- NY —> Moscow, No. 972, 11 July 1944, to VIKTOR. The second internal message is quoted as follows:

  **Please give us some guidance regarding your plans for the transfer of ARSENIJ to TYRE [NYC]. For what purpose and under what cover is it intended to carry out the transfer? Please take into account the fact that ARSENIJ's cover ..... is connected with the aircraft industry.**

  **[covername EMULSION is mentioned]**

  **[ 68 groups unrecovered]**

  **apart from MIKhAJLOV could be BORIS. KOROBOV is ill-fitted for independent work and moreover he is at present in Alaska. We are interested in using for this purpose the engineer IZVEKOV. Please check on him. We think that he is not in touch with the NEIGHBORS [GRU]. In A.'s place [presumably ARSENIJ's, rlb] it is essential to have an authoritative person who could hold down his job. Please send an answer not later than 20th July.**

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1559, 6 November 1944, to VIKTOR, from ANTON — Leonid R. Kvasnikov, head of the KhU, technical targets Line. The message begins with reference to ARSENIJ in the SPGC's field of activities. ANTON continues that because of the nature of ARSENIJ's mission and the lack of time "to coordinate the transfer of A.'s probationers, I have decided":

  **1. To hand over FERRO, NEMO, and NUL to KOROBOV.**

  **2. BRONYa .... before A.'s departure will also be transferred to KOROBOV.**

  **3. ShUM will be warned through his mother after A.'s departure.**

  **4. With GORN and TOMAS a password will be arranged for a possible meeting between them and another person.**

  **As A.'s family will evidently move to TYRE, I intend to turn over to KOROBOV A.'s house, where he can continue the work which he does jointly with A. For maintenance of the house we shall be required to make an additional payment of 30 dollars a month. A. agreed to the additional payment.**

This message gives us a good picture of ARSENIJ's net, a net run directly by KGB officers rather than by American Communists on behalf of the KGB. ARSENIJ's assets would be assumed by covername KOROBOV (Nikolaj Pavlovich Ostrovskij), who was also under official cover at Bell Aircraft. We may assume from the last paragraph of the message that the two of them had been running a document photography operation at ARSENIJ's residence. The network identified in the message:

[65] Jacob Golos and later A-bomb espionage chief ANTON (Kvasnikov) also appear in this message, along with the unfortunate AKIM, soon to be head of the Fifth Line. Covername GLAN is also in this message, as being in liaison with some of the SGPC operatives — he later handled MARGARITA [redacted]

NEMO: William Pinsley, an employee of Curtiss Wright Corporation (b)(6)

NUL (ZERO): Leona Vivian Franey, librarian at Bell Aircraft.

BRONYa: possibly [redacted] an employee of Bell Aircraft.

ShUM: [redacted] — he would be contacted through his mother.

Other covernames have not been identified: GORN, TOMAS. The recruitment of some of these people is discussed in a later section of this chapter.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1804, 22 December 1944, to VIKTOR from ANTON. Most of this message could not be recovered but ANTON tells the Center that, "ARSENIJ is considered the senior engineer". The rest of the message probably continues to describe the hand overs and related arrangements, one recovered phrase says the, "The possibilities of A.'s scheduled departure he talked over with FERRO and BOLT" and in another fragment ANTON ties ARSENIJ's departure to someone receiving a letter (Bell Aircraft?).

More Handovers in the KhU Line

In NY —> Moscow, No. 912, 27 June 1944, MAJ told VIKTOR that:

> **Connected with us in the KhU Line is SMART. We propose to transfer IRI and GURON to him. We request your sanction. To transfer these probationers to GUS .... He is wondering why the monthly payment of 100 dollars was discontinued [15 groups missing]**

Unfortunately SMART, presumably an American, was never identified, nor were IRI and GURON (ERIE and HURON) though Morris and Lona Cohen are good candidates. GUS is Harry Gold, sometime courier for the atomic bomb net.

In NY —> Moscow, No. 943, 4 July 1944, MAJ describes a group leader, covername RELE, who has never been identified in spite of some rather interesting clues:

> **[73 groups unrecovered] moreover RYBOLOV and NINA will be handed over to RELE who has been introduced to KALISTRAT. Concerning MASTER see our No. 483. Your proposal to make RELE group leader for RYBOLOV, MASTER [4 groups unrecovered] is impracticable. RELE is disabled and has an artificial leg. Frequent trips are difficult for him. He lives in the Philadelphia area.**

At one time the FBI and NSA identified RELE, later known as SERB, as "possibly" Morton Sobell — this identification dropped off by 1978. RYBOLOV (OSPREY) and NINA have not been identified. I have withheld the identification of MASTER who is discussed in more detail in the recruiting section of the next chapter. This message also contains a list of the agents who ARSENIJ controls (for which see above — the unidentified covername EMULSION, later known as SIGNAL, also appears as one of his agents).

In NY —> Moscow No. 776, 25 May 1945 (one of the last readable NY KGB messages), SERGEJ, now acting or regular Resident in place of MAJ who had gone to San Francisco told VIKTOR of some important agent transfers — agents serving in the Lines concerned with the preservation of the Soviet state:

> **On 29th May ChEKh will complete the transfer to ROMAN of the probationers dealing with the POLECATS and RATS. On 1st June in accordance with the understanding with VADIM, ChEKh will be handed over to VADIM in TYRE.**

The meaning of this message and its unlovely covernames: Covername ChEKh, who is party stalwart Robert Owen Menaker would transfer to Dr. Robert Soble (ROMAN) the agents working the Trotskyite

[POLECAT] and Zionist or other Jewish organizations [RATS] targets. Thereafter, KGB officer NAZAR (Stepan N. Shundenko) would transfer Dr. Soble to VADIM, Anatolij Gromov, the KGB Resident in Washington (the handover would take place, however, in TYRE — New York City).

Efficient Liaison Between the FACTORY and the PLANT

Yet another KGB Line, possibly the Residency's administrative line, appears in a message concerning liaison between the Amtorg office (the FACTORY) and the Consulate (the PLANT), the location of the Residency (the OFFICE). In NY —> Moscow, No. 1717, 6 December 1944, MAJ proposed some internal recruitments for liaison purposes. Though the full extent of this liaison seems unclear, it must have included local courier duties between these NYC locations. The message:

> **The problem of efficient liaison in our line between the FACTORY and the PLANT continues to be extremely acute. For the time being we do not know any people who could be used in this line full time (ANTON can occupy himself on this only partly and NINA is overburdened in SVAT's office and is in no position to carry out our tasks regularly). I propose:**
>
> **1. For regular [liaison] between the FACTORY and the PLANT to recruit KAPLUN and SVAT, who comes to the PLANT every day, if you have no objection on principle.**
>
> **2. For external liaison between our workers and eventually probationers to draw in KAPLUN's wife, a former employee of ours. Liaison between KAPLUN and the OFFICE we shall effect through MUSYa ... and SI. Telegraph agreement. ANTON will carry out the recruitment of the two KAPLUNs.**

At the very least this message means that covername SVAT, who was Mikhajl M. Gusev, president of AMTORG and Timofej Y. Kaplun, the vice-president of AMTORG (and his wife Elena) would be brought into the know about the Residency and the need for getting material back and forth.

G. Communist Party Liaison: Bernard Schuster (ECHO, DICK)

Much of the Venona story concerns the espionage activities of the American Communist Party. However, it is useful to have a section to describe some of the liaison Line between Earl Browder and the KGB, as seen in the work of CP "gofer" Bernard Schuster. This section will also contain some messages to show CP work at the ports and in Philadelphia and Chicago.

Polish-born Bernard Schuster became a U.S. citizen in 1928. He was a graduate of New York University and later worked as an accountant and proprietor of his own company. He was a long-time member of the Communist Party specializing in liaison matters involving the underground work on behalf of the KGB and he ran investigative leads for the KGB for their agent recruiting process. His Party or street name was "Chester", a name that appears in at least one message along with his Venona covername.

ECHO/DICK messages are cited throughout this study, following are some samples of his liaison work and the problems he had in serving both the Party and the KGB:

In NY —> Moscow, No. 849, 15 June 1944, MAJ gave the Center a straightforward view of the American Communist Party as an open, viable political organization: he said that the recent re-organization of the Party "is unlikely in the near future to make any difference to the rather insignificant influence their votes have hitherto had in elections".

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1221, 26 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. Here Schuster [ECHO] recommends that the KGB resume contact with an old source of Golos:

> **ECHO reports that the Peter Rhodes who was connected with us through [Jacob Golos] a number of years ago is in Italy working for the RADIO STATION [the Office of War Information]. ECHO met R.'s wife who had arrived in TYRE. She said that her husband has no liaison with us in Italy. ECHO recommended him as a reliable fellow.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1457, 14 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. This important Schuster/CP message is full of covernames identified as follows, after which the message is quoted in full (in the message, note that even MAJ has gotten confused about covernames):

ECHO = Schuster
TYRE = NYC
IKS = Jack Katz
RULEVOJ/R. = Earl Browder, CP chairman
KANT = Mark Zborowski
YuG = also apparently Schuster
VADIM = Gromov, the KGB Resident in Washington
"A" line = technical means

> **ECHO told me:**
>
> **1. He can as a rule carry out independently only tasks concerning the identification and checking of people within the limits of TYRE. As soon as [1 group unrecovered] ECHO beyond the limits of TYRE or**
>
> **[40 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **through IKS ECHO finally went to RULEVOJ and told him that, as the situation was so abnormal and as he was powerless to do more than he was doing, he was thinking of going to IKS and asking to be released from work with us. Instead of objecting, which E. was counting on, R. agreed.**
>
> **E. emphasizes that, from the moment the reform of the organization was effected, the [American Communists] have been carrying out his tasks very slowly even if this has involved only a slight risk. The leading workers do not make up**
>
> **[19 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **people in the "A" line**
>
> **[72 groups unrecoverable and unrecovered]**
>
> **5. Regarding KANT (your No. 4675) E. said that if we vouch for him [5 groups unrecovered] only E. and one other [American C.P. member]. KANT will have to submit an application and complete questionnaires.**
>
> **6. I did not know about YuG until the question of his transfer to VADIM arose. I now discover that E. and YuG are the same person. Telegraph instructions before the regular meeting not later than 17 October.**

• Ten days later, in NY —> Moscow, No. 1512, 24 October 1944, MAJ reported to VIKTOR on the most recent meeting with Schuster, whose covername was being changed from ECHO to DICK. The second

paragraph of the translation is exceptionally important for history of American Communist Party connections to the KGB. Quoted in full:

> **Your No. 4827**
>
> **At the regular meeting ECHO (henceforth DICK) told me that on the last occasion he applied to RULEVOJ [C.P. chairman Earl Browder, rlb] on the instructions of IKS and not on his own initiative.**
>
> **In accordance with your instructions I explained to DICK that henceforth he must carry out our tasks without resorting to the help of RULEVOJ.**
>
> > **[85 groups unrecovered or unrecoverable and some fragments omitted by rlb]**
>
> **please sanction the employment of GRIGORIJ in the capacity of technical liaison with DICK and BOB (henceforth CzECh). This is particularly important to me in order that I may have more frequent meetings in the town with SERGEJ, NAZAR and other workers of the OFFICE and members of the NINE. Reply by telegraph not later than 27th October.**[66]

So, Schuster was to do the KGB's bidding without coordination with Earl Browder. In section H. the Schuster story continues as part of the struggle between the old and new KGB net control systems.

The Communist Party and KGB in Philadelphia and Chicago

Some KGB (and GRU) messages refer to their activities, in conjunction with the Communist Party, outside the Residency cities. Here are two examples each, from Philadelphia and Chicago:

- NY —> Moscow, No. 579, 28 April 1944, from MAJ to the Center. Quoted in full:

> **For obtaining leads on persons working in the port of PHILADELPHIA and processing shipping firms we have checked [name withheld, rlb], henceforth LAVA, born 1910, native of [an area of Russia, data on parents given, rlb]. Arrived here in 1927 on a Soviet passport. Has relations in the USSR. Citizen of the USA. Sensible fellow. Works as a mechanic in a shipyard in PHILADELPHIA and is chairman of the United Russian Committee for Aid to the Native Country. Information from our lengthy check and from [members of the American Communist Party] gives a favorable picture of him. The position he occupied in the milieu of Slav organizations possesses interesting possibilities for the Fifth Line, in consequence of which LAVA is extremely important. Please sanction temporary liaison for AKIM with subsequent transfer of him to a group leader in PHILADELPHIA. AKIM is acquainted with him personally on an official basis.**
>
> **In Post No. 1 of this year we asked for permission to establish contact with [name withheld, rlb] who works in vessels of the Grace Line and is an activist of the Seamen's Union. Please telegraph a reply.**

- In a long message NY —> Moscow, No. 1661–1662, 28 November 1944, MAJ and AKIM advise SEMEN of various Fifth Line activities in Philadelphia, Vancouver and elsewhere. LAVA's group was by then

[66] Covernames BOB and CzECh = Robert Owen Menaker; THE NINE are sometimes referred to as THE TEN — the KGB cooptees at Columbia University. "Technical liaison" means keeping in touch with an agent, not the use of technical means, as employed by Technical Line A, or technical targeting as with the KhU Line.

functioning. The message also shows the American Communist Party hard at work helping the Fifth Line on the docks — the following is an edited version of the message:

> **Please put a temporary stop to the arrangements for AKIM [head of the Fifth Line, rlb] to work in VANCOUVER .... until receipt of a detailed report on the state of the work of the Fifth Line ....**
>
> **We are daily carrying out the following work: political indoctrination of Americans engaged in loading Soviet cargoes through [KGB agents], [Communist Party members], and PATRIOTS [meaning unk, rlb] making use of all Soviet loading personnel. Despite exceptional difficulties, we are organizing the political indoctrination of the crews of the American ships. We are checking out local seamen's clubs, organizations, and persons who have in the past invited Soviet sailors or are intending to meet them in the future under the plausible pretext of 'cultural care'. [covernames of NYC agents and group leaders are given, rlb]**
>
> **Should AKIM be transferred to VANCOUVER .... LAVA's establishment in PHILADELPHIA will have to be handed over to MAK, as there is nobody else to hand them over to.**
>
> **Although MAK is an energetic, honest worker, and at present is getting familiar with PHILADELPHIA and is engaged in selecting Probationers on the docks where Soviet cargoes are being loaded in this port, nevertheless his complete ignorance of the language and lack of experience in work with a foreign agent network, the danger of an unavoidable early compromise in TYRE (after his being transferred twice) and of an unavoidable stoppage of work already begun [7 groups unrecoverable]. Handing all cases over to MAK will lead to the liquidation of our establishment in CARTHAGE, the inevitable [1 group garbled] of the Americans being cleared in**

[remainder of message poorly recovered: references to covernames and the GRU–naval; and in closing the request that the Center, 'please report our arguments to Comrade PETROV', that is to Beria; rlb]

Here are two Chicago references, briefly mentioned (Chicago appears elsewhere in Venona), both are NY —> Moscow, MAJ to VIKTOR; the first, No. 847, 14 June 1944; the second No. 619, 4 May 1944:

> **On the 16th I am going to CHICAGO. Do you recommend seeing IPATOV in the line of cover and on what pretext?**
>
> **********
>
> **In reply to Number 950, the object of ECHO's trip is as follows.**
>
> **OLSEN is district leader of the [Communist Party][67] Olsen's wife, who has been meeting RAMZAJ is also an active [Communist Party member] and met RAMZAJ on the instructions of the organization. At our suggestion ECHO can get a letter from OLSEN with which one or other of our people will meet RAMZAJ and thereafter will be able to strike up an acquaintance. Advise your consent to these measures.[68]**

[67] In this case the term is the "Fraternal"

[68] This message was quoted in Chapter XI also — it is thought to relate to atomic bomb espionage.

The two sentence message is especially interesting: MAJ asks permission to meet covername IPATOV in Chicago in the Line of Cover, in other words as the vice-consul from NYC — but he also needs an idea for a valid pretext to meet even that way. IPATOV is unidentified.

H. A Three Way Struggle for Control: MAJ – ALBERT – ROBERT

In her long statement to the FBI, Elizabeth Bentley described the struggle for control of the Silvermaster net and the activation of a new net (Perlo) in Washington. Bentley told the FBI that Silvermaster and Golos favored net control by American C.P. veterans (themselves), while the KGB wanted to assume more direct control. The same power struggle took place in regard to the new Perlo net.[69] These events can be traced through Venona, confirming Bentley's information and providing the inside views of the Residency — information unknown to Bentley.[70]

This will be one of the longest sections of this study, presenting, generally in chronological order a series of New York <—> Moscow KGB messages of February 1944 to April 1945.[71] Though my purpose is to show the struggle for control, I have included a number of other ALBERT and ROBERT messages to show the scope of their activities.

Who Was Who

Nathan Gregory Silvermaster, Venona covernames: ROBERT, and, before that PAL, was an old-time communist who controlled an important KGB net in Washington consisting of government employees. Originally Jacob Golos had been his principal; later Bentley acted on behalf of Golos (the latter lived in New York and declining health kept him from continuing the NYC–Washington shuttle). Born in Russia, he came to the U.S. in 1916, eventually earning a PhD from the University of California. He taught at St. Mary's University in California and later worked for the state. He moved to Washington D.C. before the war and during the Venona period was employed by the Agriculture Department and the Treasury Department and had substantial personal access to classified information with the latter.

His wife Helen Witte Silvermaster, Venona covername: DORA was the daughter of a Russian nobleman. She assisted her husband in the network and may have had some access to classified information through her own government employment.

Their live-in friend William Ludwig Ullman, Venona covernames: DONALD, PILOT, POLO, a Missourian from a rich family, served in the Treasury Department until he entered the Army in 1943, where be obtained a commission and eventually reached the rank of major in the USAAF. He was assigned to the Air Staff at the Pentagon and had exceptional personal access to classified information. Unmarried, he lived with the Silvermasters for many years and a number of Venona messages describe the mutual interests of this happy family of spies.

[69] Perlo and his people were veteran Soviet agents — but they seem to have gotten lost in the pre-war transition from the GRU to KGB and had become (perhaps) inactive.

[70] Bentley never met the NY Residents, and during her espionage career dealt mostly with C.P. controllers of the agent-officer type (Golos and Katz) and their networks. The only KGB officers she met were the illegal ALBERT and, late in the game, the Washington Resident Gromov.

[71] In her statement to the Bureau, Bentley put ALBERT, who she knew as Bill, into the picture in 1943; she also described in some detail how Golos saw the efforts of the KGB to take charge. He died in late November 1943. However, I've concentrated on 1944 – 1945: better examples of who is doing what, more complete traffic coverage allowing a more coherent picture.

**ALBERT/MER. The Illegal Resident in the U.S.**

We have discussed the illegal ALBERT, earlier covername MER (MAYOR) and his American wife, who was the niece of American C.P chairman Earl Browder, covername: RULEVOJ.

Many of the people in the Silvermaster net have already been mentioned in various messages (see the Harry D. White chapter for example). Following are the total Venona mentions of the principals (the reader may rest easy: all these messages will not be quoted):

Greg Silvermaster

a. PAL (PEL) : 37

b. ROBERT : 53

Lud Ullman

a. DONALD : 3

b. PILOT : 15

c. POLO : 8

Isklak Akhmerov (known to Elizabeth Bentley as "Bill")

a. MER : 30

b. ALBERT : 40

Before plunging on, a few words from Elizabeth Bentley's statement to the FBI describing the appearance and manner of Silvermaster and ALBERT ("Bill" to her) by way of suggesting that the KGB types in the U.S. in those days didn't necessarily look like what we had imagined:

*"Silvermaster spoke English perfectly with a British accent."*

*"(Bill [that is ALBERT]) is a meticulous dresser and wears young businessman's type clothes, wears a triangular shaped handkerchief in his jacket pocket, which usually matches his tie and socks. In the summer he wears brown and white seersucker suits and brown and white sport shoes and a coconut colored straw hat."*

*"(Al [that is the Washington Resident, Gromov]) wears gold rimless eyeglasses and is a natty dresser."*

*"Catherine [ALBERT's wife] is ...5'8" or 5'9" in height... of slender build. She has dark blond hair and at that time wore her hair in a sort of feather-cut fashion...she usually wears suits with ruffled blouses."*[72]

Routing the Espionage Material

The introduction of the illegal MER (later called ALBERT) into the process had made the routing of material even more complicated. In a Personal for VIKTOR message of 23 February 1944 (in reply to an inquiry from the Center), the New York Residency stated:[73]

> **The PAL/POLO material goes through GOOD GIRL, MER, ShAKh. Most of the material received which has been processed by MER**
>
> **[126 groups unrecovered or unrecoverable]**

In other words the Silvermaster/Ullman material went first to Bentley, then to the illegal MER and then to KGB officer Konstantin Alekseevich Shabanov.

The New Network

In a NY —> Moscow message of 29 April 1944, signed by the illegal MER he reports on a conversation with Elizabeth Bentley (GOOD GIRL).[74] This long message has 179 groups unrecovered or unrecoverable. Bentley told MER that after Jacob Golos' death she had gotten some instructions from Earl Browder (though what these were could not be broken out of the traffic). She continued (MER puts her words in quotes):

> **PAL used to meet RULEVOJ [Browder] before meeting me. In the future if RULEVOJ permits my meeting with PAL [4 groups unrecovered]. Even [Golos] used not to meet PAL more often than once in six months.**
>
> MER finishes quoting Bentley and now it is he speaking:
>
> **Possibly she is making this up and exaggerating. At least [3 groups unrecovered] exclusive control of the PROBATIONERS and expressed an unreasoning fear that we will contact them direct. It is essential that MAKSIM or I should see RULEVOJ and come to an agreement: that the whole group and GOOD GIRL**
>
> **[many groups not recovered]**

MER then mentions AMT (misspelling for John J. Abt) and mentions people in an agent group: "Kramer, Perlo, Flato, Glasser, Edward Fitzgerald and others in a group of 7 or 8 [members of the Communist Party]." Most interesting:

> **GOOD GIRL talked with [Abt] and Perlo. They told her that this group was neglected and that nobody was interested in them. Kramer is the leader of the group. All occupy responsible posts in CARTHAGE [Washington].**
>
> **[here MER uses the coverterm NEIGHBORS, 29 unrecoverable groups after a reference to Abt and Perlo, rlb]**

[72] Bentley's critics usually draw attention to the dramatic nature of her books and articles — this however is from her statement to the FBI. Her descriptions of the KGB working stiffs such as Jack Katz are unflattering.

[73] NY —> Moscow, No. 278, 23 Feb 1944, signature not recovered.

[74] NY —> Moscow, No. 588, 29 April 1944.

**For more than a year MAKSIM and I tried to get in touch with PERLO and FLATO. For some reason or other RULEVOJ did not come to the meeting and has just decided to put GOOD GIRL in touch with the whole group. If we work with this group it will be necessary to remove her and [2 groups unrecovered].**

**Recently I met with Perlo in ARENA's flat. For your information I have never met RULEVOJ.**

ARENA is probably Mary Wolf Price, sometime secretary to the famous journalist and author Walter Lippmann. It is apparent that these people had formerly been affiliated with the GRU (in the old Alger Hiss group), lost contact, and the KGB (at least MER and the sometime NY and Washington Resident, MAKSIM) was trying to find them. Bentley wanted to run them; MER wanted to get her out of the loop.

Bentley and Earl Browder got their way, for MER reports to the Center on 13 May 1944:[75]

**On RULEVOJ's instructions GOOD GIRL contacted through Abt a new group in [Washington]**

**[53 groups unrecoverable]**

**MAGDOFF – KANT. GOOD GIRL's impressions: they are reliable [Communist Party Members], politically highly mature; they want to help with information. They said that they had been neglected and no one had taken any interest in their potentialities**

**[29 groups unrecoverable]**

**STORM. RAIDER, PLUMB, TED and KANT will go to [New York City] once every two weeks in turn.**

**PLUMB and TED know PAL. We shall let you have identifying particulars later.**

Note that the members of the new network, originally mentioned by true name only, had been given covernames:

KANT = Henry Samuel Magdoff
STORM = unidentified
RAIDER = Victor Perlo
PLUMB = probably Charles Kramer
TED = probably Edward Joseph Fitzgerald

On 30 May 1944, MER sent a message to VIKTOR giving some description of the members of the new network: TED, KANT, RAIDER all being described as long-time members of the Communist Party, and all then employed in different divisions of the War Production Board.[76] PLUMB reported that he too was a long time Party member, currently working for the Kilgore Committee (Senator Kilgore chaired the War Moblization Sub-Committee of the Senate Military Affairs Committee). MER also mentioned other agents – not necessarily connected to this new net (most of this part of the message could not be recovered — I quote extracts without specifying the missing groups):

**Donald Wheeler 'IZRA', has been a [member of the Communist Party] for several years, a Trade-union official, capable, works in the Labor Division, Research and Analysis Branch of IZBA [the OSS].**

[75] NY —> Moscow, No. 687, 13 May 1944. MER is the signatory, no addressee.

[76] NY —> Moscow, No. 769, 771, 30 May 1944, MER to VIKTOR.

**********

**He maintains a close friendship with MUSE and has repeatedly tried to marry her.... SLANG often comes to TYRE..... Harold Glasser is an old FELLOW COUNTRYMAN [member of the C.P.]. Temporarily abroad.**

MUSE has not been identified. SLANG is Jane Zlatovsky of the OSS (discussed in that chapter).

Problems with GOOD GIRL

**GOOD GIRL. Elizabeth Bentley was a major KGB operative in NYC and Washington.**

MAJ sent at least three messages to VIKTOR during July 1944, describing the continuing problems with Bentley — GOOD GIRL — and his own connection to MER:

- NY —> Moscow, No. 973, 11 July 1944:

  **By post No. 5 of 7th July there was sent to you a detailed communication of MER about GOOD GIRL. Here are the contents:**

  **GOOD GIRL is very much taking to heart the fact of MER's direct contact with PAL [Silvermaster], evidently supposing that we do not trust her. She is offended at RULEVOJ for having consented to our liaison with PAL. MER assumes that GOOD GIRL for a long time**

  **[162 groups not recovered]**

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1052, 26 July 1944. In one of the short internal messages, MAJ asks VIKTOR, "In connection with MAKSIM's departure how often should one meet MER and should I be the one to meet him?...Telegraph your decision." In other words MAKSIM, the former NYC Resident and until recently the Washington Resident, had been in liaison with MER.

• Ny —> Moscow, No. 1065, 28 July 1944. This message concerns GOOD GIRL (Bentley), RULEVOJ (Browder), MER and covername DIR,[77] who is presumably Mary Wolfe Price, [redacted] sometimes employed as Walter Lippmann's secretary. The first paragraph is quoted in full:

> **Your No. 3028. Some weeks ago GOOD GIRL told MER that RULEVOJ as a result of conversation with DIR had apparently decided that DIR must be withdrawn completely from our work in order to employ her fully on [American Communist Party] work. In RULEVOJ's opinion DIR's nerves have been badly shaken and her health is poor, which renders her unsuitable for our work. In MER's opinion it is possible to get RULEVOJ to change his opinion about the advisability of this decision which MER suspects was made under pressure from GOOD GIRL, who for some reason dislikes DIR. MER has informed GOOD GIRL that if DIR is really ill she will need rather to be withdrawn for a rest but afterwards be used on liaison with a conspirative apartment etc. [that is, DIR to run or handle contact with a Safe House, rlb.] She has been working for a long time and has acquired considerable experience. MER proposes that she should not be employed on active [American C.P.] work. Telegraph your opinion.**

MER/ALBERT and some Agents

Following are three messages about MER, whose covername changes to ALBERT, and his agent operations: selected to further show the range of his work and the support given to him by the Residency:

• NY —> Moscow, No. 975, 11 July 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. This message is a confusion of covernames, but it hints at MER's earlier secret work in the U.S. (before he re-entered the country in 1942). None of the agent covernames in this message, other than MER has ever been identified. Quoted in full:

> **Your No. 2701. MER has not met LEONA for more than four years. About a year ago BARK [6 groups unrecovered] [D% her] possibilities limited. LEONA has been trying unsuccessfully to get herself a job in the RADIO STATION [Office of War Information]. Upon returning from the PROVINCES [Latin America] she got together with her husband and in BARK's opinion wanted to consult him before renewing**
>
> **[19 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **works at one of the larger broadcasting stations in TYRE [NYC]. BARK speaks favorably of him. MER cannot check on LEONA's husband in greater detail, as he does not remember his name. Telegraph the name.**
>
> **Your No. 2792. MER has not met JULIA for more than four years.[78] According to his information she is living in TYRE somewhere near Lake Geneva.[79] She lives on the resources of her rich father and has completely withdrawn from social activity. MER will try to find out more about her.**

[77] Previously known as covername ARENA.

[78] This would be an old use of the covername JULIA, as it could not be the same as the prominent covername JULIA of the 1944 traffic: the latter was KGB officer Olga Khlopkova.

[79] Presumably Lake Geneva, New York (state) — however, the FBI and NSA looked at various possible meanings without coming to a final conclusion, or identifying this JULIA.

**MER never knew TONYa personally and her whereabouts are unknown to him. Some years ago she used to meet TOM and GRANT.[80] MER recommends getting in touch with her through RED HEAD — they are good friends.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1114, 4 August 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. The first paragraph of this message (the only one quoted) concerns covername FRENK, who was State Department official Lawrence Duggan, a Harvard graduate, who joined the State Department in 1930 where most of his career concerned Latin America. In Jan 1944 he became Director of the Office of American Republic Affairs at State, and he later held a position with UNRAA. He committed suicide on 20 December 1948.[81]The message:

**FRENK has been appointed [2 groups unrecovered] Assistant Diplomatic Advisor of the SHELTER [UNRRA]. The former ambassador of the COUNTRY [US] to RIO now occupies his previous post. MER [4 groups unrecovered] [B% Residency did not know] about this change. According to MER, FRENK, even before this, was announcing that his position in the BANK [State Dept] was precarious but, since MER confronted him with the question of keeping [2 groups unrecovered] about leaving the BANK, F. in our hearing never [9 groups unrecovered] F.'s potential.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1208, 23 August 1944, to VIKTOR (sender not recovered, presumably MAJ). MER's covername has now been changed to ALBERT. The JULIA of this message is KGB officer Olga Valentinova Khlopkova, formerly under the cover of the Vice-Consulate in Los Angeles where she was a clerk. The first paragraph of this message is quoted as follows:

**Since as you indicate JULIA is to occupy herself in the main with processing ALBERT's materials, we propose also laying on her technical liaison with his office.[82] Please bear in mind that after LINA's departure the problem of the delivery of ALBERT's materials will become extremely grave because the only persons constantly going to an from between the FACTORY [AMTORG] and the PLANT [Consulate] are SERGEJ, ANTON and AKIM. SERGEJ's wife comes round here once or twice a month since there is nothing for her to do at the PLANT.[83]**

"We will demand a reply"

In his long complaint to VIKTOR about MAJ's poor performance as the NY Resident, SERGEJ included in his charges the fact that, after meeting with ALBERT, MAJ said that he still didn't know what ALBERT was doing. In the following message NY —> Moscow, No. 1215, 25 August 1944, MAJ complains to VIKTOR about ALBERT:

**Your number 3887. Despite [C% repeated] reminders ALBERT has not even written to the OFFICE. We will demand a reply once more and if we do not get one we shall have to clear things up in a personal talk which we are proposing to hold in the near future.**

[80] GRANT and TOM were sometime GRU covernames in, respectively, Ottawa (the Resident) and NY.

[81] Duggan will appear in a number of other Venona messages cited in this study. Duggan's death followed discussions with the FBI concerning his activities on behalf of the Russians. The unquoted, and unrelated parts of this message concern destruction of a cipher pad and the repayment of a loan by a KGB officer.

[82] It will be recalled that ALBERT has been characterized (by the FBI and CIA) as the Illegal Resident. The coverterm Office usually means Residency. Here the term might mean ALBERT's operation rather than a place?

[83] See the messages quoted earlier in this chapter concerning liaison between KGB operations at AMTORG and the CONSULATE.

"ZVUK's education is making itself felt" : Problems with ROBERT's net

In a very long message to VIKTOR on 1 October 1944, No. 1388–1389, MAJ explained ALBERT's problems with Greg Silvermaster (ROBERT). Like Elizabeth Bentley (GOOD GIRL), and the late Jacob Golos (ZVUK), Silvermaster wanted to continue the old ways of net control, keeping the direction in his hands. Much of this message was quoted in the chapter on Harry Dexter White; almost the entire message is quoted below. I have generally omitted the several C% qualifying indicator used a number of times in the translation — however, the % qualifiers do appear in the Harry White chapter (as they do in all the chapters on major individual cases).

**Your telegram No 4012 [not available]. ALBERT has told me that his new cover holds good and that in the near future he will send us a special note on this subject.**

**In order to invest wisely the sum allotted by you ALBERT has to think out a number of details which will take him some time yet.**[84]

**Your no. 4270 [not available].**

**1. On the question of the possibility of splitting ROBERT's group into smaller units ALBERT gave the following answer:**

**KOL'TsOV's meeting with RICHARD [Harry White] and KOL'TsOV's attempt to obtain answers to a number of questions of an international character produced an unfavorable impression on ROBERT. ROBERT was surprised at our decision to have recourse to the aid of a special man for raising with RICHARD questions on which ROBERT himself as leader of the group, in his own words is working ceaselessly. Why did we decide to ask RICHARD**

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

**in other words this step of ours ROBERT took a as a mark of insufficient confidence in his business abilities. It is true he later expressed regret at having reacted touchily [6 groups unrecovered] in ALBERT's opinion shows that ROBERT is jealous about 'encroachments**

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

**not to agree to our measures calculated to 'by-pass' ROBERT. ALBERT is convinced that an attempt to 'remove' members of the group, however circumspectly, will be received [1 group unrecovered] unfavorably by ROBERT. I said that in that case he could in the meantime have a chat with ROBERT about the possibility of breaking the group into two or three sub-groups for greater secrecy and more effective organization of the work, leaving however the overall direction in ROBERT's hands.**

**ALBERT warned me that for the time being the question can only be put in this form and that he will discuss it with ROBERT when the occasion offers. At the same time he observed that his relations with ROBERT were very good and that the latter would consent to a meeting between ALBERT himself or EL [ELSA, i.e. Helen Lowry, ALBERT's wife, rlb] and any member of the group. Possibly in ROBERT's tendency not to 'relinquish' anyone, ZVUK's [Golos] education is making itself felt.**

[84] In other words the Center approved money for ALBERT to set up a cover occupation. Bentley thought he was a clothier or furrier.

**2. Your points 3,4,5,6 and 7 I have passed on to ALBERT in detail.**

**3. ALBERT promised to write specially on your point 1. For the time being he told me the following:**

**ROBERT is not restricting himself to receiving material from the PROBATIONERS, but is giving them tasks in consultation with ALBERT. The instruction not to impersonalize the group's materials will be born in mind (it is already being carried out). PILOT [Lud Ullman] is bringing ROBERT's wife (he is not married himself) into the processing of materials. She is not only in the know about her husband's work, but actively helps him in the processing.**[85]

**There is no information about the KhATA's [FBI] inquiry being finished. ROBERT is no less interested in a favorable outcome than we are and is trying to keep abreast of developments. If they have not dismissed him from his present work, it means that there is no concrete information about his work for us but only suspicions connected with the [Communist Party membership]. His wife is not free from suspicion.**

Rewards for ROBERT

The question about control of ROBERT's net had not been answered :the Moscow —> NY traffic of this period in unreadable, so we do not directly see the instructions from the Center. In any case, the Center gave ROBERT a medal though ALBERT had suggested going further: the KGB should help ROBERT and PILOT buy a farm. Some extracts from two messages:

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1481–1482, 18 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. This message begins with a report (only partially readable) on ROBERT's problems with the Civil Service Commission over some allegations of communist activity. A long stretch of the message is poorly recovered; following are some fragments (the text is verbatim; I've added the bullets):

- **force him out of his work and we consider it necessary to assure**
- **At present the land gives ....annual income which is**
- **himself such a material basis without waiting for dismissal. In ROBERT's and PILOT's opinion they may succeed in devoting part of the land to a commercial airport (on the assumption that many people will have private planes) and then the cover will be exceptionally good.**
- **disposed person and in case of compromise**[86]

The last part of this message is fairly solidly read:

**and figures that the rent for a house in the city [3 groups unrecovered]. In ALBERT's opinion ROBERT should be assisted in acquiring the farm since the presence of such a [5 groups unrecovered] can continue our work with certain changes in the group's structure. ALBERT requests us to advise as quickly as possible whether we approve ROBERT's proposal and whether we are ready to give financial support.**

[85] Compare this specific Venona information concerning Helen Witte Silvermaster with the Venona message about Ethel Rosenberg. Ullman operated a photo lab in the Silvermasters' house, so Ullman (PILOT) is getting her into that work.

[86] This sounds sinister: the farm a place to dispose of people? The 30 groups preceding this phrase are unrecovered and the 40 groups following are unrecoverable.

The Center seems to have given ROBERT a medal instead of buying a farm for him. ALBERT and ELSA may have gotten something too. Following is the relevant part of NY —> Moscow, No.1635, 21 November, MAJ to VIKTOR (earlier parts of the message are intelligence reports from ROBERT):

> **1. ALBERT asks for word to be passed to you that ELSA [?] and he profoundly [20 groups unrecoverable]**[87]
>
> **2. ROBERT is sincerely overjoyed and profoundly satisfied with the reward given him in accordance with your instructions. As he says, his work for us is the one good thing he has done in his life. He emphasized that he did not take this only as a personal honor, but also as an honor to his group. He wants to see the reward and the book.**
>
> **3. DORA is very uneasy about the fate of her relations and again asks news of their whereabouts.**

In paragraph 2 of the message, the reference to the "reward and the book" strongly suggests that ROBERT got a high decoration and the accompanying book inscribed with his name and the name of the medal — Elizabeth Bentley described her own medal and book in her statement to the FBI. The Residency or the Center must have still been holding the medal and book, however.

The Arguments Continue; and the Center sends Instructions

In late December 1944, MAJ delegated contact with ALBERT to JULIA, assisted by unidentified covername BERG:[88]

> **JULIA has taken on BERG after prolonged and thorough checking in respect of external surveillance with the [D% guidance] and assistance of NAZAR [KGB officer Stepan Shundenko]. After a day's interval we intend to switch the liaison with ALBERT to BERG–JULIA.**[89]

On 4 January 1945, MAJ sent VIKTOR a long update on the ALBERT – ROBERT situation. ALBERT seems to sitting on the fence, though in this message MAJ does not criticize him. The message is quoted in full — note that MAJ dropped some words from the first sentence:[90]

> **In a special letter of 2 January ALBERT reports, while demonstrating to ROBERT for a long time the advisability of setting up a separate group of two or three persons whose technical work (the delivery, filming and safekeeping of materials) would not be concentrated in ROBERT's apartment. ALBERT explained that we are not proposing to deprive him of the direction of the people but we want to create the most secure possible**

[87] In the context of paragraph 2, this fragment at least suggests that ALBERT got something from the Center, probably a medal.

[88] NY —> Moscow, No. 1803, 22 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR

[89] FBI surveillance of Grigorij Kheifits, the KGB Resident in San Francisco disclosed his secret meetings with JULIA = Olga in Los Angeles in late 1943 and at various times until her transfer to NYC. On at least one occasion the FBI gained access to certain papers held by Kheifits, including a long letter signed "Julia". The letter — a report on conditions at the consulate in Los Angeles — identified GRU people under consular cover: the confidential courier, the clerk and even the Consul himself. Interesting tradecraft item: in the letter she uses her communications covername name JULIA and likewise uses the communications covername for Kheifits — KHARON. The Bureau was especially interested in Kheifits because of the information in the Anonymous Letter of 1943. A translation of Julia's letter is item 50–003 of the Venona collection of supporting collateral.

[90] NY —> Moscow, Nos. 12,13, 15, 16, 4 January 1945.

**conditions for the processing and safekeeping of materials, since, judging by well-known facts, the [FBI] is probably interested in ROBERT's activities, and there is no guarantee that, as a result of some accident, materials he may have at his place when it happens will not fall into the hands of the [FBI] and that our sources would not be compromised in this way since at the moment everything is concentrated in one place. After some friendly conversations on this subject ROBERT agreed in principle with our opinion.**

**It is possible that ROBERT thought we wanted to take away some of his people counting on getting better results and concluded from this that we were not altogether satisfied with his achievements. In ALBERT's opinion he succeeded in convincing ROBERT that our sole aim was organizational security. It must be said that on the basis of our workers' information ROBERT has been inclined to be critical and dubious of our ability to deal with the PROBATIONERS. Especially indicative from this point of view is the incident with KOL'TsOV[91]**

**[36 groups unrecoverable]**

**AILERON our worker; if ALBERT proposed this ROBERT would reject it.[92] Therefore ALBERT is trying to convince him of the necessity of setting up a small group whose technical work would be concentrated outside ROBERT's apartment, ROBERT retaining the general direction of it.**

**It has been decided to train ZhOLUD and ZhENYa for the processing of materials in their own apartment. The couple are conscientious, capable and fairly well disciplined. Notwithstanding, however, their devotion to the [members of the Communist Party] and personally to ROBERT, the latter has from time to time complained of their caprices. Thus a few weeks ago DORA told ELSA [?] in ROBERT's and PILOT's presence that the couple were trying to get themselves free of us.[93] ALBERT does not regard this seriously but he no longer doubts that it costs ROBERT great pains to keep the couple and the other PROBATIONERS in check and to get good work out of them. Being their leader in the [Communist Party] line ROBERT has the opportunity to give them orders.**

**In ALBERT's opinion our workers would hardly manage to work with the same success under the [Communist Party] flag. We may possibly set up direct liaison with ZhOLUD, AILERON and the rest, but it is doubtful whether we could secure from them the same results as ROBERT, who, constantly dealing with them, has many advantages over us. The whole group [D% of ROBERT's]**

**[54 groups unrecoverable]**

**ROBERT reacted very unfavorably saying that before ALBERT's time somebody else tried to part him and PILOT, that he did not believe in our orthodox methods and so on. As he said, it would not be hard to separate PILOT from him but he**

---

[91] The KGB officer who had met directly with Harry White and arranged for future meetings.

[92] AILERON = Abraham G. Silverman was an important KGB asset in the Materiel Division of the Air Staff, the Pentagon. The fragment concerning AILERON suggests that Silvermaster would object if ALBERT proposed putting a KGB officer ("our worker") directly in touch with AILERON.

[93] ZhOLUD (ACORN) = Bill Gold and ZhENYa = Sonia Steinman Gold.

**[32 groups unrecoverable]**

**[D% PILOT] will not cool off toward our work. It goes without saying that PILOT is not so deeply devoted to us as ROBERT and DORA are, for he comes from a well-to-do family of western TOWNSMEN [Americans].[94] In ALBERT's opinion, for PILOT's successful work we are in large measure indebted to ROBERT and DORA who treat PILOT very solicitously, and in the near future we shall gain nothing at the cost of separating PILOT from ROBERT. ALBERT is trying not to permit a joint business like a farm or an aerodrome and has advised ROBERT to let PILOT work out this project himself if the latter is sure of success saying that in case of need we should render PILOT some financial support. In ALBERT's opinion the project is unrealisable and later they will drop it.**

**ROBERT is displeased by our interference in his personal affairs, which is what he considers the farm to be. In his words, all these years he and the others have worked at high pressure and they want to acquire a farm rather for relaxation than as a cover. For a long time PILOT and DORA have been drawing up all kinds of plans relative to the farm.**

**In PILOT's opinion the farm will be a good pretext for his absence in CARTHAGE in case of his dismissal, for having been dismissed he could hardly remain in CARTHAGE even temporarily without legal income.[95] Seeing how much they were carried away by the idea ALBERT did not consider it wise to insist**

**[29 groups unrecoverable]**

**leadership of this new group will have to be left to ROBERT.**

**What has been expounded does not mean that the mutual relations of ALBERT with ROBERT are strained or that ROBERT does not want to obey us. ROBERT esteems ALBERT highly and would not [2 groups unrecovered] any request of ours if ALBERT insisted. ALBERT does not doubt that ROBERT would introduce him to any of his people if ALBERT requested, for organizationally ROBERT has become very close to us.**

**ALBERT emphasizes the soundness and timeliness of the award and the gift of ROBERT, who is pleased at our high evaluation of him.**

**Note by the OFFICE. In the same letter ALBERT adduces short biographical data on ZhOLUD and ZhENYa.**

In another message of 14 January 1945, (no. 14) MAJ describes more difficulties in dealing with an agent who takes his connection to the American Communist Party quite seriously. MAJ indicates the difficulty he had been having in gradually getting Earl Browder out of the picture (Bentley no longer handled agents). Note also that ECHO (Bernie Schuster) is still in the picture:[96]

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[94] Ullman was a member of a rich Missouri family that had extensive land holdings in Texas.

[95] PILOT — Lud Ullman — need not have worried. Before the end of the war he was promoted to Major, and stayed in the Reserves several years thereafter. He returned to the Treasury Department at the end of 1945, leaving there in 1947 to move to New Jersey with the Silvermasters where they formed a construction business.

[96] This NY —> Moscow message contains three internal messages, the first signed by ANTON, the next two by MAJ. I quote the third message, internal No. 9.

> **Your number 6218 [not available]. I am bearing in mind your reminder about the line of conduct in respect of the leadership of the FELLOW COUNTRYMEN's organization [C.P.]. However, as ALBERT has already firmly promised ROBERT and SAKS to pass on to RULEVOJ [Earl Browder] certain materials (in particular the Chinese Communists) and it is hard for him to go back on his word, please permit by way of exception the passing on of these materials to RULEVOJ through VADIM or ECHO [Bernie Schuster], at the same time warning ALBERT that this is the last time. ALBERT emphasized that SAKS's attitude to this question was very jealous and he gave him to understand that he would not hand certain materials over to us without a guarantee that they would be handed over to RULEVOJ too and, should we refuse, he might try to establish liaison with RULEVOJ over our heads.**

In this context, SAKS looks like an unidentified covername rather than a reference to Saville Sax (covername STAR) who helped the KhU Line in atomic bomb espionage recruiting.

MAJ now told the Center, in a short NY —> Moscow message, No. 71, 17 January 1945, that their illegal ALBERT was not a team player:[97]

> **Your telegram No. 188 [not available]**
>
> **The letter which I transmitted to you ALBERT wrote before receipt of your latest instructions about ROBERT and PILOT. I consider it useful to advise you for orientation of ALBERT's concrete views against the Residency.**

Moscow's Instructions to NY KGB

A number of early 1945 messages from Moscow Center to the KGB in New York proved exploitable; four give instructions on the matter of ALBERT and ROBERT's net (the first three signed by VIKTOR, the fourth by PETROV):

- Moscow —> NY, Nos. 179–180, 25 February 1945. Unfortunately 423 groups of this message were not recovered. The message opens with Moscow's warning that the fact that "some [agents] of ROBERT's group are working for us is widely known among other [members of the Communist Party] .... their knowledge about PIK belonging to ROBERT's group." Party members also knew about ROUBLE, TAN and TED. Much later in the message comes the following:

> **On the basis of these facts we consider that ALBERT's liaison with ROBERT and, probably the internal liaison in ROBERT's groups, is not organized operationally. Therefore we propose that you and ALBERT should carefully discuss the question [4 groups unrecovered] photographing material received [the rest unrecoverable].**

- Moscow —> New York, No. 253, 20 March 1945, in which VIKTOR addresses both MAJ and ALBERT. This message concerns the handling of PAZh (PAGE) who is probably Presidential assistant Lauchlin Currie — other PAZh messages will be discussed in the chapter on the White House; the purpose here is to show another major example of the tensions between all the KGB parties and how directly the regulars would control ROBERT's people:

[97] This message contains at least 3 internal messages; the first, no. 44 is the one quoted. Internal no. 49 or 50 is tantalizing: MAJ says that this is his second request to the Center regarding the, "most valuable leads reported in his time by MAKSIM to Comrade PETROV." This seems to mean the former Resident MAKSIM had told PETROV ( Beria himself) some important local information not shared with MAJ.

**The proposal of ALBERT and ROBERT**

**[55 groups unrecovered]**

**ALBERT [3 groups unrecovered] ROBERT with P.**

**[41 groups unrecovered]**

**We consider that in this case ALBERT and ROBERT have displayed hastiness. Entrust to R. the leadership [2 groups unrecovered] P. ROBERT should trust [10 groups unrecovered] P. trusts R., informs him not only orally, but also by handing over documents. Up to now PAZh's relations with ROBERT were expressed, from our point of view, only in common feelings and personal sympathies. [6 groups unrecovered] question of more profound relations and an understanding by PAZh of ROBERT's role. If ROBERT does not get P.'s transfer to our worker, then he [7 groups unrecovered] raising with PAZh the question of P.'s closer complicity with ROBERT.**

Moscow —> NY, No. 292, 29 March 1945. Here the Center draws attention to their earlier warning that the composition of ROBERT's espionage net was known to many Communist Party members and "It has been ascertained further that there is known also RICHARD's [Harry White] connection ...". Most of the message was not recovered.

Moscow —> NY, No. 337, 8 April 1945. This important message is signed by PETROV (Beria) and contains a warning about US–UK counterintelligence work and directs NY to follow certain procedures in handling the take from the ALBERT – ROBERT espionage operation. The covernames/terms in the first paragraph:

VADIM = Anatolij Gromov, KGB Resident in Washington
Competitors = Intelligence and security services
COUNTRY = U.S.
ISLAND = UK

**According to information from VADIM the Competitors of the COUNTRY and the ISLAND have worked out joint measures for strengthening work**

**[71 groups unrecovered]**

**transmission of information by telegraph. Give tasks [15 groups unrecovered] ELSA [ALBERT's wife]**

**[29 groups unrecoverable]**

**and people devoted to us. In the work with ALBERT's group it is essential to adhere to the following:**

**1. JULIA's meeting with ART or BERG should not be more than 3 times a month.**

**2. [15 groups unrecovered]**

**3. ROBERT's materials should be conveyed to [New York] only on film and in small batches.**

**4. ELSA, BERG and ART, who are to be co-opted for the purpose, are to take turns in making the trip to [Washington] for ROBERT's materials. With the probationers [3 groups unrecovered] [B% ROBERT] and his wife DORA.**

*XIII. NEW YORK KGB: AGENT NETWORKS, TRADECRAFT AND SECURITY*

Note that the Center considers that ALBERT has taken charge, as instructions 1 thru 4 apply to "ALBERT's group". Even by this late date, with the Washington Residency now sending more messages to the Center than New York, the materials photographed by this espionage group are still sent to NY.

# XIV. NEW YORK KGB: RECRUITING, GENERAL TRADECRAFT AND INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION

## A. Introduction

This chapter continues the previous one, illustrating the various activities and techniques of the New York KGB, but unlike Chapter XIII. it will contain some messages from 1942–43, along, with those of 1944–45. Here we will look at tradecraft: spotting, assessing and, "drawing into our work", all of which are part of the recruiting cycle; then general examples of tradecraft, including operational security and technical means; finally the reporting to Moscow of what had been collected (and EEI/targeting data). Messages concerning these subjects appear throughout this study, but this chapter focuses on them.

## B. Agent Recruiting

The Venona traffic does not describe the recruitment of all or even many of the agents run by the New York KGB. They were recruited before the Venona period (that is before 1942) or at least before 1944. Venona does not tell us when Julius Rosenberg, Harry White, Greg Silvermaster (ROBERT), Jones O. York, Lud Ullman et al became involved with the KGB. Following are a dozen Venona messages relating to recruitment, some of uncertain significance, which show how the Residency spotted and assessed people and sought the Center's approval for recruitment.

### ARSENIJ's Recruitments

The last chapter contained a sub-section on network control by covername ARSENIJ, KGB officer Andrej I. Shevchenko who worked at Bell Aircraft in Buffalo under the cover of the Soviet Government Purchasing Commission. Following are four NY messages concerning ARSENIJ's recruiting efforts:

• NY —> Moscow, No. 705, 18 May 1943, from MAKSIM to VIKTOR.[1] The opening paragraph of this poorly recovered message:

> **In number 253 [not available] we asked you to check on H. [name withheld, rlb]. We report additional data: H. works as an engineer [3 groups unrecovered] design office of the firm BELL, where new types of aircraft are being designed.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 996, 26 June 1943, from LUKA to VIKTOR (LUKA — Pavel Klarin — the interim Resident between MAKSIM and MAJ). This message nicely shows the elements of the recruiting cycle:

> **ARSENIJ has been keeping up an acquaintance with an engineer of the Design Group of the Bell firm, V. [name withheld, rlb]. V. has passed favorable comments about our country in ARSENIJ's presence and has expressed a wish to go to work there after the war. V. is a Swiss. He was born in Hungary. From 19xx he lived in Switzerland where he received a technical education. In 1922 he went across to the [U.S.], became acquainted with SIKORSKI and in 1923 worked with him.[2] In 1930 he went to work for the firm North American, after that Consolidated.**
>
> **[53 groups unrecoverable; presumably the rest of the message also refers to V.]**
>
> **He is living in the settlement of KENMORE (near BUFFALO) on [address withheld]. According to our people's information his views and technical knowledge represent [1**

[1] MAKSIM was the New York Resident before MAJ.

[2] Sikorski was an aviation pioneer. He developed the helicopter.

**group unrecovered] interest for us. [3 groups unrecovered] has outstanding experts. He knows the English, French, German, Hungarian languages.**

**Please check and report your decision about the possibility of using him.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 941, 4 July 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. This is an exceptionally interesting tradecraft message — also note MAJ's chastisement of the Center. Quoted in full:

**Your number 2816 [not available]. [4 groups unrecovered] with me to the work of KOROBOV and PROBKA [CORK] are ill-considered. As regards PROBKA (Bill Pinsly), we asked you for vetting and sanction in letter No. 8 of 31st August 1943 and by telegram on 23rd August. KOROBOV (OSTROVSKOE) is ARSENIJ's assistant and a check and recheck of additional data for further work there was asked for by telegram. Your consent to drawing him in is contained, in substance, in telegram No. 4615 of last year. Please instruct the workers to look through papers more carefully.**[3]

**Concerning NUL [ZERO], she is a secretary in the secret archives of ARSENIJ's plant. In 1943 ARSENIJ took an aviation course in which a recommendation was made that the plant's calculations should be examined for official use. On the strength of his good personal relations with the Vice-President, ARSENIJ was given the opportunity of familiarizing himself with these materials. ARSENIJ got to know the secretary, gave her a few small presents and, after prolonged study of NUL, asked for one of the secret documents. NUL gave him the documents. The signing on of NUL as a trial**

**[49 groups unrecoverable]**

**directly at the plant. Everyone working at the plant is subject to scrutiny by the military security guard. Only ten members at the top administrative level of the plant, and also ARSENIJ and KOROBOV, pass through without being examined.**

**NUL is Leona FRANEY. She is 30 years old, and was born in the U.S. of Polish parents. Her husband is an American [withheld, rlb].**

**Advise your decision on NUL ...**[4]

• NY —> Moscow, No. 780, 792, 25–26 May 1945, from ANTON to VIKTOR.[5] ARSENIJ had since left his post in Buffalo, so this message is some sort of re-cap for the Center concerning people who ARSENIJ had spotted or possibly recruited on a provisional basis:

**Description of ARSENIJ's acquaintances:**

**1. At the end of 1943 ARSENIJ became acquainted through ShPONKA's (SPLINE) brother with B. [name withheld], 39 years old.**[6] **Home address: [withheld], telephone number**

**[11 groups unrecoverable]**

---

[3] The parenthetical mentions of the truenames Pinsly and Ostrovskoe, after their covernames, is in the messages that way. Apparently the Center has bungled something here and had tried to blame MAJ.

[4] She has been found in Venona 6 times.

[5] ANTON headed the NY KGB's KhU Line, which worked against the atomic bomb project and other high tech targets.

[6] ShPONKA (SPLINE) = probably [redacted]

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

**He specializes in plastics engineering and up to the present time has been holding the post of Deputy Head of the Planning and Engineering Department of the Bell Company. B. is by conviction a left winger and somewhat of an idealist. He is married, but lives alone in a home for [1 group unrecovered]. ARSENIJ became very intimate with him and he willingly began to impart information about his work. In particular he promised to give an evaluation of the new machine tools for the production**

**[69 groups unrecoverable]**

**if there is an opportunity [3 groups unrecovered].**

**2. At the end of April ARSENIJ became acquainted with an engineer, E. [name withheld], 44 years old. Lives at: 201**

**[39 groups unrecoverable]**

**on internal combustion engines [1 group unrecovered]. In 1944 our airmen KOChETKOV and SUPRUN who were appointed to**

**[46 groups unrecoverable]**

**more than a month. ARSENIJ sent him a few small presents, thereby ingratiating himself with E. still further. The firm refused to pay the hospital expenses [3 groups unrecovered] he became very resentful**

**[6 groups unrecovered]**

**look for a new job. E. is a good specialist and**

**[20 groups unrecoverable]**

Some Recruiting Proposals in 1942

Following are three messages, MAKSIM to VIKTOR, that are the earliest recruiting messages in US <—> Moscow Venona (very few 1942 messages were read, part of only one from 1941 and none earlier).

- NY —> Moscow, No. 780, 29 May 1942. A poorly recovered message:

**[20 groups unrecovered]**

**L. [name withheld, rlb], who is living in Cleveland where he is unknown even in our agent network [2 groups unrecovered] with the local organization. He is working as commercial director of the [a publishing company, rlb], 33 years of age,**

**[15 groups unrecoverable]**

**[20 groups unrecovered]**

**For this purpose I intend to go to Cleveland on 7th June in order to visit the Company. [2 groups unrecovered] TVEN[7] is going and he can get in touch with L. and begin to draw him into our work.**

**Answer by this date.**

- NY —> Moscow, No. 854, 16 June 1942. This message concerns the status of three recruitments — only one of them identified. Quoted in full:

[7] TVEN = Semen Semenov, KGB, under AMTORG cover.

**The signing on of 'UCN/29' was delayed because of his prolonged absence and the necessity for checking additional information. He arrived today and we shall report results.**[8]

**[1 group unrecovered] LIZA, we are cultivating the American Jane FOSTER with a view to signing her on. She is about 30 years old and works in Washington in the Dutch [2 groups unrecovered] translator of Malay languages. FOSTER is a FELLOWCOUNTRYWOMAN [member of the Communist Party],**

**[86 groups unrecoverable]**

**[several scraps excluded, rlb]**

**Her vetting was carried out by us. She is a FELLOWCOUNTRYWOMAN. She is described by the [local C.P.] as a [1 group unrecovered], dedicated person. ....TER has also been reported on favorably by FAN who is a friend.**[9]

**We intend to sign her on with a view of making use of her connections and [2 groups unrecovered] her trip to South America our tasks [1 groups unrecovered]. We urgently request approval.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 887, 25 June 1942. Most of the message was not recovered, but one partly recovered phrase seems to concern recruitment for support of illegals:

**contacts and carry out recruitment among Russian [3 groups unrecovered] upon arrival of illegals. For carrying out the [1 group unrecovered] of PETROV....**[10]

An Artist, an Architect and an Orthopedist

These three messages from 1943, mention two proposed recruitments and a reactivation. Only the last message clearly states how NY KGB proposes to use the person:

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1104, 8 July 1943.[11] Only a few groups of this message were recovered. Notice the use of the term "legend":

**Your number 2842 [not available]**

**We communicate information on ....B. [name withheld]....30 years old**

**[50 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

**Works as a commercial artist, earnings $40 a week. We suggest the following LEGENDA**

**[remainder unreadable]**

• NY —> Moscow, No.1112, 9 July 1943, from LUKA to VIKTOR. This long message, about half recovered, describes the odyssey of a former KGB agent who lost touch because of the war in Europe, but who had eventually reached Cuba and from there had written the Soviet Consulate in New York. Following are some extracts from the message:

[8] The form "UCN" simply means unrecovered covername, that is, and especially for the earlier KGB codebook [redacted] the groups that represented the covername could not be broken out. This is a US–UK Venona term, not a KGB term. While UCN–29 remains unidentified, both as to covername and truename, UCN–9, for example is known to be KGB agent Cedric Belfrage (he was identified from message context, his Venona covername unknown)

[9] According to the published translation, this "....TER" is not FOSTER, but yet another potential recruit with the same final syllable in her name. FAN is unidentified.

[10] The covername PETROV was recovered three times in this message : in 1944–45, PETROV was the covername for Beria.

[11] No addressee; signatory not recovered.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

**The PLANT [Consulate] has received a letter, dated 30 June, from Mikhail Rubinstein from Cuba, in which he refers to his [9 groups unrecovered] 'UCN/12.[12] From the contents of the letter one may conclude that Rubinstein is a probationer of ours who has lost contact.**

**Rubinstein gave the following brief particulars about himself: he was born....in Dnepropetrovsk. He left the USSR in 1926 .... graduated from the Paris Special School of Architecture, was an architect and a specialist on concrete**

**[a summary of a subsequent paragraph: Rubinstein was interned by the Germans after the 1940 invasion, released, imprisoned again and escaped. He reached Cuba in 1942; applied to the Soviet Embassy in Washington to be enlisted in the Red Army. He had a good knowledge of France, England, Germany, Italy, Spain, USA. His wife's first husband killed in the fighting in France in 1940 etc.,rlb. The closing part of the message follows:]**

**On 12–13 July ZAIKIN is leaving [2 groups unrecovered] Cuba and we could use him for passing on .... drop it into a letter box in Cuba.[13]**

**Please advise whether R. is our probationer and [remainder unrecovered]**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1118, 9 July 1943, from LUKA to VIKTOR. NSA/GCHQ reissued this message three times, the final reissue, 5 Jan 1979, was among the last batch of Venona translations. It was reissued the last time because the true name of the potential recruit had been recovered. Much of this interesting message could not be recovered, but the Residency's plans for the recruit are clear enough. Covername ROMAN = Dr. Robert Soble, KGB agent and net controller:

**In post No. 3 of this year we reported on an acquaintance of ROMAN, Professor T. [name withheld, rlb] a well known orthopedic doctor. According to ROMAN's information T. is active in public life, a rich man**

**[20 groups unrecovered]**

**contacts in medical and politico-social circles in the COUNTRY [U.S.]**

**[30 groups unrecovered]**

- **drugs etc. The end of the war**

**[35 groups unrecovered]**

**T. [3 groups unrecovered] us help since presumably he is in a position to help the advancement of people who are useful to us in government establishments which are of interest to us. He can be used as a cover for illegal [3 groups unrecovered] other countries [2 groups unrecovered], participation in our operational enterprises etc.**

[12] See the earlier footnote on the meaning of UCN. Rubinstein must have put his KGB codename/covername in the letter.

[13] Dmitri I. Zaikin, Soviet vice-consul in New York (apparently a clean diplomat) became consul-general in Havana in July 1943. The Residency was proposing that Zaitkin carry a message from the KGB.

**[1 group unrecovered] T. is a [1 group unrecovered] man for us please urgently check on him and sanction his being signed on.**[14]

A Walk-In at the Consulate

NY —> Moscow, No. 1589, 1590, 30 September 1943, from LUKA (addressee unrecoverable).

In this case S. (name withheld, rlb), covername MASTER applied to the Soviet consulate in New York, "to admit him to Soviet citizenship and to let him enter the USSR." In this message the Residency gave the Center the true name and assigned a covername (unlike the Dr. T. message above, where we have the truename but a covername was not assigned on the spot) using the formula, "[truename] henceforward MASTER".

As with many of the recruiting messages, this was in system [redacted] entered later in the Venona program and which was still being worked when the program shut down in 1980. System [redacted] Many of these messages were very tough to solve, and by the time they were solved, the investigative agencies were less likely to pursue a case. The MASTER case never reached a satisfactory conclusion and MASTER denied any wrongdoing.[15] The KGB reported that MASTER worked in the research and design office of a New York electronics company [name withheld] involved in classified work; that his wife was a member of the Communist Party; that he had been involved in a Communist front organization in college. The Residency gave the name and DPOB of his wife and her father (born in Russia). Unfortunately, after the opening paragraphs, only fragments of the message can be read. Some of these fragments (quoted verbatim, preceded by my bullet and without mention of the number of missing groups):

- **He is not a Communist Party member but considers himself**
- **radars**
- **and location of the position while....weapon**
- **the laboratory has developed a new**
- **work and exchanging experimental work with British laboratories on**
- **MASTER is working at present on an oscillator for a secret apparatus**
- **We are checking him through ZORA.**

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

Covername ZORA was KGB agent and busy recruiter Flora Don Wovschin, discussed in the next chapter. The KGB believed she knew MASTER, as they were active in the same Communist front student group.

An Assessment, Another Agent Who Lost Contact, and a Policy Question

These three messages particularly emphasize the Communist Party connections of the individuals of interest to the KGB. The third message is from Moscow.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 916, 12 June 1945, from SERGEJ to VIKTOR. Most of this message was recovered — it is an assessment of the husband of covername LANYa, either as a security measure to assure

[14] We do not know if T. was signed on by the KGB. The collateral support files in the Venona Collection contain no mention of him — however, I have reason to believe that one of the agencies determined that T. was dead and no further investigation was conducted (and once that was determined, no extensive analysis was made of u/i covernames to see if he could be identified as one of them).

[15] The FBI interviewed MASTER who admitted making an inquiry to the Consulate but generally downplayed the sincerity of his interest in going to the USSR. He denied furnishing the Soviets with classified information and he reported only minimal contact with the Russians after his initial application. The decrypt certainly suggests that MASTER discussed sensitive information with the Russians.

the Center that the agent's husband is safe, and/or part of the recruiting cycle in preparation to signing him on. Some extracts:

> **LANYa's husband is R. [name withheld] born 190?, native of [Polish Galicia], arrived in the COUNTRY [U.S.] in 19??. A working textile worker, is an active worker in local textile worker organizations and Jewish organizations. Joined the [Communist Party][16] in 1928; in 1934 went to the USSR where he stayed a month and a half. Is described by the [members of the Communist Party][17] as a reliable and responsible comrade.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 82, 18 January 1945, from MAJ to VIKTOR. This message rather looks like agents falling over one another, as the agent who has become separated from his control is offering his services in the Treasury/Bureau of Economic Warfare, both already overrun with KGB agents. MAJ seems quite willing to turn him back over to the GRU. PIK may be Virginius Frank Coe of the Silvermaster (ROBERT) net and an employee of Treasury and the Bureau of Economic Warfare — note the reference to the illegal ALBERT. TSERBER has not been identified. Quoted in full:

> **Recently TSERBER asked ROBERT how he could reestablish contact with the man through whom he was connected with the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN [members of the C.P.]. TSERBER works in the accounts section of PIK's department. Since you advised in no. 3937 that TSERBER was a probationer of the NEIGHBORS [GRU] allow us to inform the head NEIGHBOR about TSERBER's request. If the NEIGHBORS have lost contact with him he probably**
>
> **[13 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **ALBERT also [3 groups unrecoverable].**

Moscow —> New York, No. 49, 19 January 1944, from VIKTOR. Here Moscow defers on a policy question. Note the involvement of Communist Party liaison man and KGB gofer, ECHO (Bernie Schuster). SERPA has not been identified:

> **Your No. 7 [not available]**
>
> **From the time of his interview SERPA [2 groups unrecovered]. His transfer to STUKACH [Jack Katz] or another worker is possible. Using SERPA through ECHO without signing him on is a question which one can decide after [1 group unidentified] upon receipt of valuable materials.**

[16] Here the KGB used the term BRATSKAYa (FRATERNAL) instead of the more common coverterm FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN(LY) for the American Communist Party (actually the term for the C.P. in any host country).

[17] This time the term is ZEMLYaKI (FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN).



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

*XIV. NEW YORK KGB: RECRUITING, GENERAL TRADECRAFT AND INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION*

[redacted]

C. General Tradecraft

This section will concern three groupings relating to tradecraft shown in traffic on the NY <—> Moscow lanes:

- Operational Security: including meets and passwords, surveillance and countersurveillance.
- Cover and money: proprietaries, occupations, cash payments to agents and officers.
- Technical means: photography, documents, communications

(1) Operational Security

Many messages concern arrangements for meetings with agents and the exchange of passwords. Following are extracts from six messages, chosen to show a variety of situations.

- In NY —> Moscow, No. 1220, 26 August 1944, MAJ tells VIKTOR that Joseph (Jack) Katz (covername DUGLAS) had just returned to New York after meeting with Amadeo Sabatini (NIK) on the West Coast. NIK reported that he had been under constant surveillance in October 1943, and that his telephone had been tapped. As DUGLAS put it, "DUGLAS thinks that NIK, being experienced, is not mistaken about this." For that reason he had stopped meeting his KGB contact for a time. NIK believed that an agent he was handling, covername ENGINEER [INZhENER], may also have been under surveillance.[18] In any event DUGLAS made the following rather complicated (actually absurd) arrangements:

> **DUGLAS arranged for a meeting of our man and NIK: on the eighth of each month at 2000 hours NIK will be in front of the Warner Theater at the corner of 7th and Hill Streets.[19] Dress: brown suit and shoes. In his left hand he will hold an unlighted cigarette. If NIK is under surveillance he will be smoking a cigar. Our man will ask: 'Aren't you Mr. Wally? I am Mr. Gordon, a friend of JACK.[20] NIK will reply: 'Henry Gordon?' Our man: 'No, Adam Gordon.' Then they are to exchange cinema tickets, one of which DUGLAS has brought [back to NY that is, rlb] the other is in NIK's possession. If there is not opportunity to deliver to our man the ticket which has been bought, numbers can be exchanged. D.'s ticket number is 304716, NIK's 304717.**

- Here is another password arrangement from NY —> Moscow No. 694, 15 May 1943:

> **Liaison may be established with BOB[21] by the following password:**
>
> **Our man: 'I am Mr. (or Miss) Moss.'**
>
> **BOB: 'Joe (or Josephine) Moss?'**

[18] This is the only time covername ENGINEER was found in the traffic. I suspect that ENGINEER was an earlier covername for Jones Orin York (known to have been covername IGLA [NEEDLE]) who had been handled by NIK after Bill Weisband went into the Army).

[19] After I unsuccessfully tried to make this into a San Francisco intersection, [redacted] of the NSA Office of Security pointed out that this is a Los Angeles address — which of course fits Jones York who worked in the aircraft industry in the L.A. area.

[20] Joseph Katz was known as Jack in his KGB life.

[21] BOB = Robert Owen Menaker who worked in the KGB's anti-Trotskyite Line in the U.S. and Mexico.



(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

**Our man: No, Edward (or Edna) Moss.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 846, 14 June 1944. In this message, MAJ advises VIKTOR of meet arrangements that are to involve the Soviet Embassy in Mexico. Covername KhE.. is Floyd Cleveland Miller, aka: Mike Cort who took part in the KGB's effort to get "Jacques Mornard", KGB agent and Trotsky's murderer, out of a Mexican prison. GOROKhOVA = Lida Gorokhova, secretary to the Russian ambassador to Mexico:

**On 11 June KhE left for [Mexico]**

**[88 groups unrecovered]**

**password: KhE will telephone the Embassy at 9:30 precisely, ask for GOROKhOVA and [1 group unrecovered] language say: he is Mr Leonard, [2 groups unrecovered] mother in Leningrad, wants to know when**

**[9 groups unrecoverable]**

**will explain about the exact days and times of reception.**

**The phone call means that a meeting will take place at 7 pm that same day at the entrance to the Teresa Cinema, Avenida Juan de Latran. KhE will hold Life magazine, will be wearing spectacles, which from time to time he will take off and wipe. Our man will hold Time magazine and in the English language he will ask KhE: 'Are you Mr. Toren?' KhE will answer: 'No, my name is Charles Bruno'. After this they will go on to talk business. If the meeting does not take place on the day of the phone call, it will be transferred to the following day under the same conditions. KhE's distinguishing features: medium height, dark hair, a wart on the right cheek, very small mustache, round spectacles.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1370, 27 September 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. This long message is multiple-subject and mostly unrecovered/unrecoverable. The end of the last paragraph, fully recovered, describes the plans for a meeting between an unidentified KGB agent, covername SMART, and a GRU officer. It appears that MAJ wants the Center to give GRU headquarters the password arrangements, that is, the scenario instructions go from: KGB NY Residency —> the Moscow Center —> GRU Hq in Moscow —> GRU Residency in New York. The reasons for this inter-service meeting are unknown:

**month of October. The time of the meeting 6 o'clock in the evening. SMART will have on a white shirt, dark blue tie, a hat on his head. He will be holding in his hand a newspaper the New York Post. The NEIGHBOR [GRU officer, rlb] should inquire: 'Where is the stadium?' SMART will point to the South and reply: 'Down this way.' After this the NEIGHBOR should call him by the name 'ELIOT'.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1523, 27 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR quoted in full in chapter VII. concerns Jones O. York. Here is one sentence of particular tradecraft interest:

**NIK could go for two weeks to identify IGLA, to establish conditions for contact and a perpetual password ....**

• In NY —> Moscow No. 202, 10 February 1945, we see that sometimes the key elements of tradecraft information got lost:

**Your telegram No. 776. SHAH did not hand on the password. Telegraph OKUN's [PERCH] surname.**

*XIV. NEW YORK KGB: RECRUITING, GENERAL TRADECRAFT AND INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION*

While the FBI was not very successful against the KGB until after the war, the Anonymous Letter of 1943 had given them potentially important information that led to considerable effort against the now identified intelligence officers: surveillance, technical means and surreptitious entry.[22] Following are seven examples of KGB countersurveillance:

• NY —> Moscow, No. 586, 29 April 1944, signed by MAJ, no addressee. The first paragraph concerns our topic:

> **For the time being ANTON and TVEN are not being shadowed any more but shadowing of KALISTRAT has started. One is forced to the conclusion that the KhATA [FBI] is carrying out 'trial' surveillance.**[23]
>
> **[14 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **not only our people but also the NEIGHBORS [GRU]**

• NY —> Moscow No. 982, 12 July 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR is quite similar to the above as described in this short internal message (No. 982 consists of three internal messages). Covername ShTOK = KGB officer Mikhajl A. Shalyapin:

> **In the last few days ShTOK has been under surveillance. We suppose that by such sporadic shadowing they are trying to expose our people 'in action'.**

In No. 1022, 20 July 1944, MAJ reported more on this:

> **Surveillance of ShTOK has sharply increased during the last few days and he has discontinued all meetings.**
>
> **[remainder of message not recovered]**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1582, 12 November 1944. MAJ reports that he is considering putting JULIA or ARTEM in direct contact with ELSA, respectively: KGB officer Olga Khlopkova and an u/i KGB officer; and Helen Lowry, an illegal and wife of the principal illegal, ALBERT. However:

> **At the moment we are checking to see whether there is physical surveillance on JULIA and ARTEM, on JULIA there is none as yet, ARTEM [believes?] that he is being followed, but checking does not yet bear out what he says.**

• William M. Malisoff, who had the covernames TALANT and later HENRY [GENRI], provided important technical information to the KGB, but he was difficult to handle. Like their West Coast technical intelligence asset, Jones O. York, Malisoff was in the business for the money. Here are two messages from ANTON to MAJ concerning Malisoff and countersurveillance, both NY —> Moscow, No. 1706, 4 December 1944 and No. 1755, 14 December 1944. The first message, if read in the context of the KGB's difficulties with Malisoff, suggests that the Russians may have believed that Malisoff had been doubled. The KGB was considering dropping Malisoff:

> **Your telegram No. 1706. I have been in liaison with TALANT for more than a year. About 20 meetings lasting from 30 minutes to an hour have been carried out. So far I have not**

[22] Bob Lamphere has said that the Bureau had no real counterintelligence program against the Russians until after the war (when the Bentley–Gouzenko–Chambers and Venona sources came along). I think the Bureau was fairly busy against the Russian target, but they had very little success and of course no idea of the scope of the KGB and GRU operations.

[23] ANTON= Kvasnikov, the KGB officer in charge of collection against technical targets including the atomic bomb; the other two were also KGB officers, TVEN = Semen Semenov and KALISTRAT = Alexandr Fomin.

**noticed a COMPETITOR [in this case, the FBI, rlb] at the meeting place. The last meeting was on 28 November — nothing suspicious. The next regular meeting is on 13 December. Should one break off liaison with him without declaring it at the last [final?] meeting or should one carry out the latter, warning him about the break to avoid TALANT seeking out me or our people at the PLANT [Consulate] ..... TALANT does not know my place of work and real surname. In the future he may meet me by chance at the FACTORY [AMTORG office] which he wants to enter as a consultant.**

**********

**The meeting with HENRY [formerly TALANT, that is, Malisoff, rlb] planned for 13 December fell through. Having verified the time I arrived at the meeting place five minutes earlier than the planned time, convinced myself that the place [9 groups unrecovered] with a delay of about 10 minutes and check on whether there was surveillance on HENRY. Approaching [1 group unrecovered] the meeting place I caught sight of two COMPETITORS who were standing at the two sides of the entrance to the [d% restaurant]**

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

**not to go to the meeting [d% at this time]. The surveillance was evident. Earlier nothing [nevertheless or however?] had been noticed.**

- Finally an example of a GRU (naval) officer reporting to the KGB about surveillance on him, NY —> Moscow, No. 1047, 2 July 1943, LUKA to VIKTOR:

**Captain Kladov today reported to AKIM that for seven days he has noticed his apartment under surveillance [1 group unrecovered]. Kladov [1 group unrecovered] is a worker of the maritime NEIGHBORS.**

Other operational security messages concern the KGB putting agents "on ice" or "in cold storage", for various security reasons. Here are two examples of the KGB use of this tradecraft term, followed by several other security messages:

In NY —> Moscow, No. 749, 26 May 1944, three familiar covernamed agents appear along with a Communist Party official whose true name is given two different misspellings:

EJGORN/EGORN: misspelled truename of Nathan Einhorn

ChEN: Zalmond David Franklin, onetime handler of Jones O. York, who preceded Bill Weisband in that operation.

ECHO: Bernie Schuster

STUKACh (INFORMER): one of three covernames for Joseph (Jack) Katz.

The message is quoted in full:

**EJGORN, ChEN's brother-in-law, the other day informed ECHO of the following: ChEN had told him that he works for us and has a special task. EGORN did not believe ChEN and told ECHO that this sort of chatter could [d% lead to unpleasantness with] the FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN [C.P. members], as ChEN's new wife is a FELLOW-COUNTRYWOMAN and other relations are FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN.**

**EGORN himself is one of the leading local FELLOW–COUNTRYMEN, occupies an official post with 'Newspaper Guild' (a newspapermen's society).**

**By post no. 2 for 1944 we advised that ChEN is not suitable for our work and proposed putting him in cold storage. While waiting your reply we have ceased to employ ChEN. We used to meet once a month. We consider that at the next meeting STUKACh propose to ChEN writing a detailed report, regarding [2 groups unrecovered] contact of his**

**[19 groups unrecovered]**

**works for us). We will once more categorically call on ChEN to put an end to his criminal chatter about liaison with us and we will put him in cold storage under the pretext of STUKACh's departure. We will continue studying his conduct through ECHO. Expedite instructions.**

In the second example of a cold storage message, many covernames are involved, but only one has been identified: OKUN = Michael Tkach.[24] NY —> Moscow, No. 881, 20 June 1944, SERGEJ to VIKTOR. The complete text of this short message:

**We are carrying out your instructions about putting PODRUGA, SIG, BUKINIST, BOETS, OREL and OKUN into cold storage. The possibilities of KLIN and MARK in the first line are, as we have ascertained, extremely limited and they too should be put into cold storage. The question of FAKIR's trip to SMYRNA [Moscow] has not been decided since the management apparently is in no hurry to fill the vacant post.**[25]

Following are some other operational security messages, the message numbers given in the footnotes:

**In order to establish IKS' contact with ZONA, ECHO was obliged to approach RULEVOJ who has a personal connection with her. RULEVOJ insists that we should not meet her as he does not consider her trustworthy nowadays. We will report further information later.**[26]

**********

**In view of the presence in the FACTORY [AMTORG] of TOWNSMEN [Americans] who display an undue interest in our citizens, and to avoid compromising ZARE's undercover status, she should be released from the work only on the condition of being transferred to the position of student at Columbia or of being sent home. I request further instructions.**[27]

(2) Technical Means

This subsection gives a few examples of the New York Residency's use of technical means, especially photography of stolen documents and the counterfeiting of papers. I have also made mention of illegals (false

[24] Michael Tkach was the editor of the Ukranian Daily News, in New York.

[25] FAKIR would be a KGB officer; I do not have the identification of the First Line.

[26] NY —> Moscow, No. 1328, 15 September 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. ZONA, an unidentified covername seen once, looks suspiciously like Elizabeth Bentley. This message shows the direct link between the KGB and both C.P. members and the Party leadership. IKS = Joseph (Jack) Katz; ECHO = Bernie Schuster, party liaison with the KGB; RULEVOJ = C.P. chairman Browder.

[27] NY —> Moscow, No. 672, 11 May 1944, MAJ to PETROV (Beria). ZARE (Elena Gorbunova), either a KGB cooptee or undercover officer, was being run by ANTON (Kvasnikov). She had discussed her KGB work with the Resident MAJ, speaking to him, however, as the Vice-Consul (his cover). MAJ did not intend to break cover in his discussions to her. Somewhat confusing.

documentation). The reader should also see XIII.b. above. Other references to these techniques are scattered throughout this study.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 581, 28 April 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, quoted in full, concerns ARSENIJ (Andrej Shevchenko), the KGB officer at Bell Aircraft in Buffalo who ran an agent net:

> **All especially secret materials received by ARSENIJ are transcribed by him by hand. In ARSENIJ's condition this hurts his eyes badly. How is it intended to give him the apparatus which earlier he [refused?]. Please allow us to buy him a new Leica, price 350 dollars. The two cameras on hand in the OFFICE [the Residency] are badly worn out, work sporadically; therefore we cannot allot one of them to A.**

• Moscow did not approve and MAJ appealed to VIKTOR in NY —> Moscow, No. 651, 9 May 1944:

> **Your number 2967 [not available]. Your objection to providing ARSENIJ with a Leica is at variance with your instructions in letter No. 1 where it is proposed to supply him with one immediately. [6 groups unrecoverable] cameras, an article which is in general permissible. Once more we emphasize that ARSENIJ suffers from severe eye-strain and he cannot copy materials.**

Even the illegal ALBERT had difficulty obtaining a camera for one of his most important operatives: covername ZhOLUD (Bella Gold) who was photographing documents at, or taken from, the Treasury Department (NY —> Moscow, No. 18–19, 4 February 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR):

> **ALBERT is urgently asking for a Contax camera for ZhOLUD[28]. It is extremely difficult to get one here. Please telegraph YuRIJ at once.**

Covername YuRIJ was Lev A. Tarasov, the KGB Resident in Mexico City.

During the war, cameras were not easy to obtain in the U.S. and in any case the Center did not lavish money on the Residencies. Cameras, lenses and film suitable for document copying could be obtained in Mexico and Venona contains a number of references to this, e.g. a 28 July 1944 message from VIKTOR to Mexico City: "Buy two Leica cameras. A sum of money amounting to two thousand four hundred pesos was transferred on 27 July addressed to [the Soviet Ambassador]."[29] Lud Ullman, the document photographer for the Silvermaster ring, used his own extensive collection of equipment and had a photo lab in the Silvermaster residence.[30]

• NY —>, No. 610, 3 May 1944; NY —> Moscow, No. 735, 22 May 1944; and NY —> Moscow, No. 773, 30 May 1944, all MAJ to VIKTOR, concern the procurement of a number of technical items. In the first two messages the Residency is obtaining recording equipment for the Center, in the third message the Residency cites the cost and availability of equipment and materials used for document forgery:

> **On the order for a sound recording apparatus we have received:**
>
> **1. Recorder – the firm [?] regards as a recorder the sound recording apparatus type 8–K which was sent to you. Inform immediately whether this corresponds to the request. Its price is 314 dollars.**

[28] Mrs. Gold obtained employment at Treasury through the apparatus specifically for the purpose of helping Harry White et al manage the transmission of documents to the KGB.

[29] Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 474, 28 July 1944.

[30] This is another interesting feature of the struggle for net control: the rich American Communist Ullman, operating in an American C.P. controlled net had better equipment than the KGB.

**2. Accessories comprising 10 sapphire cutters. Price 8 dollars each.**
**3. In addition to the order the firm has sent a microphone, price 18 dollars,**
**[12 groups unrecovered]**
**57 dollars.**

**********

**It was proposed that a recorder for the [K–8] PRESTO apparatus be obtained. Your number 2106 [not available] states that all that is needed is a cutting head. We could not, however, refuse the recorder which was received before your answer ....**

**********

**In reply to your letter No. 3 Here is the approximate cost in dollars of the order by sections:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **1. Vegetable fibers:** | **3000** |
| **2. Printers inks:** | **1000** |
| **3. Photo material:** | **14000** |
| **4. Engraver's tools:** | **3500** |
| **5. Quartz lamps:** | **4000** |
| **6. Series of material** | **800** |
| **7. Equipment** | **250** |
| **Total** | **26550** |

**Most of the order we shall not be able to execute independently ( fibers, inks, varnish, photographic materials, any sort of lamps) in view of their not being available for unrestricted sale. We will try to carry out the order through [AMTORG] and [The Soviet Government Purchasing Commission].**

- KGB officer covername LEONID handled technical matters for the Residency (see Chapter XIII):

**He is qualified in the 'A' technique and successfully carried out a number of special tasks connected with documents on receiving and dispatching people.**[31]

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1203, 23 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR is one of the more detailed messages concerning the manufacture of false papers. Unfortunately neither source covername has been identified and both were probably Americans. Quoted in full:

**To organize technical point 'A' in TYRE [New York] we have been compelled to set up 2 independent enterprises, as ODESSITE covers only the second part of the technical process of the manufacture of the dies. The basic part [1 group unrecovered] can be carried out by BUKINIST. According to our data BUKINIST is a devoted and reliable person. Please authorize use of BUKINIST in the 'A' line. We consider it essential to expand ODESSITE's enterprise by organizing a stamp workshop and transferring it to another part of the city. Suitable premises for this purpose have been selected. For the organization of the two enterprises and for technical equipment 2500 dollars comprising 1000 for ODESSITE and 1500 for BUKINIST are required. Telegraph permission.**

- The Center's reply was not found, but less than two months later the New York Residency seems to imply that the 'A' Line work has been wrapped up. NY —> Moscow, No. 1465, 14 October 1944:

[31] NY —> Moscow, No. 1076, 29 July 1944, to VIKTOR.

**Your No. 4622 [not found]. Specify which passports need to be sent. Are MER's, NELLI's, MALYaR's [PAINTER] documents to be sent? By the next regular post we are sending the main equipment in the 'A' line. After this there will not be any '[1 group unrecovered]' business left on the spot in TYRE [New York].**

In the foregoing message covername MER is the illegal Akhmerov, also known as covername ALBERT. One might guess that NELLI and MALYaR were illegals too, but they remain unidentified. Venona contains a very large amount of MER/ALBERT material, but relatively little else on specific KGB illegals in the U.S. As discussed in a later chapter, KGB illegals are prominent in the Mexico City traffic, and we have a separate section in chapter XX. on the movement of the GRU (naval) illegal, SALLY, into the U.S. One of the other explicit covername references to a U.S. connected KGB illegal is in Moscow —> NY, No. 55, 20 January 1943 where the Center says, "We intend to send our agent LUND to your country illegally: he is of German nationality ...." LUND has not been identified.

(3) Cover, Proprietaries, Money and the KGB supplement to the GI Bill for College Benefits

This subsection will contain two groups of messages. First, a sampling of New York messages concerning proprietaries and other cover arrangements; second, messages that refer to direct cash payments and other financial assistance. Strictly speaking a proprietary would be a business set up and financially backed by an intelligence service using its own officers or some combination of auxiliaries, contract personnel or agents. In Venona it is not always clear if the person running the business, which he uses as a cover, is getting financial support from the KGB. The messages:

• In an early Venona message, NY —> Moscow, No. 794, 1 June 1942, MAKSIM tells VIKTOR about a proprietary cover that also involves the GRU. The message is very poorly recovered but refers to a Henry L. Gert (the last name could be transliterated as Gerth, Hert or Herth) and gives parts of at least two addresses. The message concluded with:

**Gert [6 groups unrecovered] NEIGHBORS will use Gert as an owner. Please confirm.**

• Some 1943 messages concerning the KGB's Latin American interests concern cover or accommodation addresses. Summarized as follows:

• Covername CARLOS (the Latin American diplomat and KGB agent Christian Casanova Subercaseaux) had suggested to the KGB that as an address for correspondence he and the KGB should use the address of a young Chilean woman, Isabel Gallardo who was married to a U.S. Marine officer then overseas. "She is working as a [1 group unrecovered] for the Chilean Line".[32]

• Three July 1943 messages concerning unidentified covername CN–32 discuss accommodation addresses in New York City, "for letters from Spain".[33] In the third of these messages, CN–32 asked the KGB's permission to use the address:

**Louis Costra**

**5 East 107 Street Apt. 1**

**New York, USA**

[32] NY —> Moscow, No. 768, 25 May 1943, signature/address not recovered.

[33] These three messages, all NY —> Moscow, the second signed by LUKA are: No. 1031, 1 July 1943; No. 1045, 2 July 1943; and No. 1053, also 2 July 1943.

**Costra is 30 years old, a Puerto Rican, [c% unmarried], local FELLOW–COUNTRYMAN [c% who has been put on ice]. From [1 group unrecovered] to 1938 he was in Spain with the Lincoln Brigade and showed himself to be [1 group unrecovered] of good quality.**

**His mother comes from Spain**

**[49 groups unrecovered]**

**also a Spanish veteran.**

• In a long, well-recovered message of May 1944, MAJ gave the Center a history and update on STUKACh's (Joseph "Jack" Katz) business cover arrangements.[34] This interesting, and somewhat funny, message is quoted in full:

**1. The money which STUKACh will receive will not be put into circulation by him personally. For the 5000 he will get a loan from W. [name withheld], proprietor of the Meriden Dental Laboratory, whose business provided STUKACh with cover for six years. About two years ago the cover fell through because S. does not work in the firm and the LIGA [U.S. government] required by law the registration of all stockholders, with an indication of their position in the firm.[35] STUKACh has very good personal relations with W. and the latter will undoubtedly give him a check for the required sum. STUKACh will deposit the check received for the necessary sum in his account in the bank and then after this will use the money from the bank. If it is insufficient, STUKACh may be given some aid by a relative of his wife's who has a watch business.**

**2. STUKACh is organizing a firm of his own and with the money available he is buying manufactured goods in the shape of watches and crocodile-skin articles: BEN [unidentified] is assisting him in this. Thus the money will be in goods. During the last two months STUKACh has been making a detailed study of the market for watches and crocodile-skin articles and has ascertained that these things are much in vogue and in great demand. Therefore he is sure that in the next three months [3 groups unrecovered] will be able to sell them: thus he will not only get back the money invested but will also make a profit of three to four thousand. He will repay his debt to BEN out of the money he makes and will carry on the business without anybody's aid. We repeat, the whole business has been worked out so that STUKACh should be the full owner of the firm and he is not inviting any partners into this work. In these conditions we can always organize any kind of business or transfer the firm to other hands. The business in its present form is safe and there should be no delay in organizing it since the watches will be arriving in the COUNTRY in the near future and must be bought up at once.**

**We await a reply as soon as possible.**

• Covername ABRAM, Jack Soble, had another ordinary business cover, as described in the poorly recovered message

NY —> Moscow, No. 625, 5 May 1944:

[34] NY —> Moscow, No. 618, 4 May 1944, from MAJ, who is replying to Moscow's No. 1669 (not available)

[35] I do not understand the legal issue.

**In mail No. 2 we informed you that cover had been fixed up for ABRAM. He [2 groups unrecovered] directly to set up a cafeteria. For this we gave him the authorized advance of 2,000. ABRAM's partner in the cafeteria, a certain A. [name withheld], had several relatives in the business and ABRAM came to suspect that A. was stealing a valuable business from him. To improve control and to expand the business, he decided to run the cafeteria himself.**

**[about 130 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

- Many Venona messages concern safe houses. Two brief extracts from messages of 1944:[36]

**We are putting KLEMENS in contact with MAKSIM–VARDO the moment they arrive. She is being used on work with probationers of the German line and as mistress of an apartment.**[37]

**********

**In accordance with the task set by us ECHO has found in TYRE [NYC] two conspirative apartments.**

[Some of the following groups are unrecovered, but the sense is that the apartments have been found or are being provided by Communist Party members whose names and addresses are given in the message, rlb]

- In NY —> Moscow, No. 1336, 18 September 1944, unidentified covername ROST (an American) seems to need money to set up a photography studio as a cover business and probably a copying operation for the KGB. The relevant part of the message:

**Your number 4271 [not available]. ROST needs to buy a camera price 500, two fans – 100, a printing press – 150, cash register 100, fittings for the studio and shop windows 600, stock 200. In all a loan of 2,000 dollars is required since he rented the premises [12 groups unrecovered] ROST did not bring in.**

- As noted earlier, the cover jobs of KGB officers sometimes limited their work for the Residency, as in the case of JULIA (Olga Khlopkova):

**JULIA has been taken on in the OFFICE [KGB Residency] as a PROBATIONER in her capacity as a PLANT worker: in these circumstances her work at the cover job takes up not only the whole day but part of the evening. Under these conditions her value to the OFFICE as an operational [6 groups unrecovered]. She is already unable to cope**

**[28 groups unrecoverable]**

**the SYNDICATE [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] about transferring her to a job in the Secret Cipher Department of the PLANT. In that case, JULIA could devote not less than 90% of her working day to the work of the OFFICE and, in the event of BORIS's falling ill or of any emergency, could even work as a cipher clerk, since she worked with ciphers before coming to TYRE [NYC]. If you have no success with this scheme, JULIA's presence here will not alleviate our situation. Bear in mind that KATYa**

[36] NY —> Moscow, No. 682, 12 May 1944, from MAJ; and NY —> Moscow, No. 1166, to VIKTOR, signature not recovered.

[37] KLEMENS= Johanna Becker; MAKSIM= Vasilij ZUBILIN; VARDO= Elizabeth ZUBILIN, his wife. Apparently the Zubilins are coming to New York.

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

**having recourse to LINA's help. KATYa was taken on as a typist in the Secret Cipher Department. JULIA can be taken on as a PROBATIONER like BORIS and a number of other Secret Cipher Department workers. We repeat that to raise this question with DED [Consul–General Kiselev] is useless as he is in no way interested [3 groups unrecovered] unclear. Please do not delay your reply.**

Some comments on this interesting message. It is clear from what the FBI learned from surreptitious access to some papers in the possession of the San Francisco Resident, Kheifits, that JULIA was a KGB officer. Perhaps MAJ does not know this. More likely, MAJ intends to handle her as an agent (PROBATIONER), though lumping her with BORIS is misleading, for he is an agent (of the informant type). MAJ's desire to get her into the Secret Cipher Office seems based on the fact that very little of her time there would be taken up by cipher work and she would be free to do Residency (OFFICE) business. Note also that MAJ needs the Center's help to effect this transfer — the Consul–General won't do it. An interesting commentary (and we've given other examples) on the limited power of the KGB in the field.

Many New York KGB messages concern payments, transfers of funds or purchases. While very few KGB agents were in it for the money, some received payments for expenses, bonuses or money to begin or support cover operations. Some examples:

"Since ABRAM needs the Money"

In two messages of summer 1943, New York tells Moscow about the transfer of funds from Canada to New York City on behalf of covername ABRAM, that is, Jack Soble. It is not entirely clear what is going on, especially as most of the second message is missing, but it looks like the KGB in Canada borrowed some of Soble's money and the Center is being asked to make it good:[38]

**In January of this year we [c% received] in the LAND [Canada] from [presumably ABRAM] five thousand Canadian dollars of his own for conveyance to TYRE [NYC] by diplomatic post. The money was handed over to KLIM who sent us one thousand U.S. dollars and promised to send the rest later. Now KLIM says he is spending the money, advised you about this and can give us no more. Since ABRAM needs the money please [c% send urgently send 3900] Canadian dollars in order to settle with ABRAM.**

**********

**Your No. 2088 [not available]. ABRAM had no liaison with our worker in the LAND. He handed over the money to STOCK who**

**[[48 groups unrecoverable]**

**Please send immediately 3500 American dollars [4 groups unrecoverable]**

Payments to ARSENIJ, ODESSIT, NICK and NICK's Wife

Here are four money messages concerning the salary and allowances of a KGB officer, payments to two agents, and the payment to an agent's wife:

• NY —> Moscow, No. 942, 4 July 1944, from MAJ, concerns ARSENIJ, KGB officer Andrej Schevchenko working out of the Bell Aircraft corporation in Buffalo, and some overseas differential pay due him (the first internal message is quoted):

[38] These two messages are NY —> Moscow, both signed by MAKSIM, the Resident: No. 992, 24 June 1943 and No. 1086, 6 July 1943.

**Please re-check the decision on the question of additional payment to ARSENIJ. It is reported that his work at home [i.e. in the Soviet Union, rlb] before being posted to the COUNTRY [U.S.] he used to receive 30 percent both at home and on previous foreign postings. From 1 April 1943 he should receive 50 percent for long service. According to the last telegram he has to make payments of 33 dollars into the OFFICE's ready cash.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1002, 17 July 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR concerns unidentified covername ODESSIT, described in a message cited above as running a document forgery operation:

**In our No. 539 we asked about giving ODESSIT a subsistence allowance of 120 dollars a month. You say you agree to 20 dollars. Please explain.**[39]

• NY —> Moscow No. 1649, 25 November 1944, to VIKTOR discusses the financial situation of NICK, the covername for Amadeo Sabatini who worked on both coasts for the KGB and at this time was re-establishing contact with Jones O. York in Los Angeles:

**For his trip here with family we paid NICK 412 [ 2 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable] Besides that in connection with [1 group unidentified or garbled] he did not work for more than two months and spent 250 of the 600 he had been keeping. As he tells it, this sum was given him for providing for his family in case of need, and he has asked us to bring this sum back up to 600. Aside from that, on DAR's coast [i.e. California, DAR being the Resident in S.F., rlb] he is to pay off the approximate difference between his earnings of about 75[a following digit(s) missing]**

**[61 groups unrecoverable]**

• There were intervening, but unexploited messages before a reply Moscow —> NY, No. 130, 11 Feb 1945, which the Center addressed to both MAJ, the Resident and ANTON, the head of the technical targets Line. A short, poorly recovered message:

**Reference your number 114 [not available]. The payment to NICK's wife of 50 American dollars monthly for her**

**[24 groups unrecovered]**

Fifty Dollars per Month to the SQUIRREL

• In Moscow —> NY No. 210, 9 March 1945, a long, poorly recovered message about LINZA — KGB agent Michael Sidorovich — Moscow Center authorizes a payment to covername BELKA (SQUIRREL) who may have been Anne Sidorovich (both Sidorovichs were couriers for the Rosenberg net; KALISTRAT = KGB officer Aleksandr Fomin):

**[150 groups unrecoverable]**

**[38 groups unrecovered**

**we do not object to the contact of KALISTRAT with LINZA and the drawing in of BELKA for [1 group unrecovered] this [1 group unrecovered]. We authorize payment to her of 50 dollars a month.**

**[remainder mostly unrecovered]**

[39] In message No. 539, New York had in fact asked for 20 dollars — a typo in the message.

*XIV. NEW YORK KGB: RECRUITING, GENERAL TRADECRAFT AND INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION*

Budget of the New York Residency

• Moscow —> New York, No. 241, 17 March 1945, signed by SEMEN lists monies transferred from the Center to New York for expenses of the Fifth Line (security of the Soviet merchant fleet, port security) but the breakout, except for AKIM's salary is not known, nor do we know the period of time covered (possibly a quarter?). AKIM headed the Fifth Line in the U.S.:

> **On 16 March in RUDENKO's name 1761 dollars were transferred for expenses of the 5th line [2 groups unrecovered]. The above mentioned sum should be spent:**
>
> **Article 1 – 600 dollars,**
> **Article 2 – AKIM's salary 315 dollars,**
> **Article 3 – 216 dollars,**
> **Article 4 – 90 dollars,**
> **Article 5 – 360 dollars**
> **Article 6 – 80 dollars**
>
> **Confirm receipt of sum. Say when you are going to send an account of expenses for the 3rd and 4th quarters of 1944.**

• In Moscow —> New York, No. 246, 19 March 1945, VIKTOR told New York of another sum of money that had been put into the Residency's account. This message is dated the same as the preceding (SEMEN's) and must have been for the expenses of those Lines under VIKTOR's direct control. Note also that the Center had separately considered the estimated needs of MAJ, the Resident, and ANTON, the head of the technical targeting line. At least for this one quarter, ANTON's KhU Line, which handled atomic bomb espionage for the KGB, was to receive only 1/4 of the amount allotted to general collection operations (which may, however, have included the Residency's overhead costs).

> **To the address of Comrade EREMIN in Washington was transmitted by telegraph 11,100 American dollars, of this: according to your estimate for the first quarter 8800 American dollars and according to the estimate of ANTON 2300. Confirm receipt of the money.**

Continuation of Payments to ART and BERG

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1052, 5 July 1945, to VIKTOR from SERGEJ (MAJ had moved on to San Francisco to handle KGB operations at the UN conference) is another of several Venona messages that asks the Center to keep paying agents. Most of the message could not be recovered. ART = Helen Koral; BERG = unidentified covername:

> **Your 4373 [not available]. The reason for the recommendation lay in the fact that we have been paying monthly to ART and BERG 100 dollars each. I consider inappropriate the termination of their salary.**

The KGB to Supplement the Education Benefits of GI Bill

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1053, 5 July 1945. The reader will recall that the illegal ALBERT and MAJ had told the Center of their desire to offer college financial aid for a daughter of their spy Harry Dexter White, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. In this message ANTON as signatory makes a similar suggestion. MAShA and KhUK (HOOK) are respectively, Eufrosina and Dmetrius Dvoichenko–Markov, Roumanian born U.S. citizens:

**Your number 4449 [not available]. 1. MAShA**

**[66 groups unrecoverable]**

**her attitude towards the question of placing KhUK at our expense in a university after his discharge from the Army. We will let you know the outcome of the meeting.**[40]

Other examples of KGB payments to agents can be found in the chapters on the Rosenbergs (bonus payments) and Weisband (the regular payments to mercenary agent Jones O. York).

D. Intelligence Reporting and EEI

From time to time the less exploitable Moscow to New York traffic contains EEI directives and ratings of the intelligence produced. However, Venona contains many intelligence targeting and reporting messages from New York to the Moscow Center. The New York KGB had at least four means of getting the intelligence gathered by their nets back to the Center:

1. Electrical message
2. Diplomatic or other courier
3. Clandestine radio
4. Secret writing

In many ways Venona can be considered a table of contents to New York's espionage production. Most of the material went by courier — it was too long and involved to transmit documents by telegraph. But the Venona messages sometimes summarize or at least announce what material is being sent out by courier, and of course many messages do indeed contain intelligence.

Both the New York and San Francisco Residencies operated clandestine radio stations, probably maintaining these for emergency situations and for some specific operations, especially regarding Latin America. The secret writing — at least that which was discovered — also involved the KGB's Latin American operations. Both the secret writing and clandestine radio activities used book ciphers, that is ciphers that could be generated by using a publicly available book, from which one constructed tables and a cipher system (or some much simpler procedure using words or letters on a particular page to spell out the message). Actually we know of three different cipher procedural groupings in the Venona context (excluding ISCOT, FAROUCHE and MASK):

1. the aforementioned book ciphers

2. the Petsamo Emergency System, in which officers at official Soviet establishments abroad memorized a word or phrase and then constructed cipher tables from these.

3. the London GRU emergency system in which the Residency used procedure 1. during 1940 and 1941 to encipher groups from the GRU codebook (the GRU Residency had run out of one time pads but still could use the codebook).

Clandestine Radio and Secret Ink[41]

Secret ink writings Buenos Aires —> NY dated 6 July and 1 August 1942 gave schedules when the Argentine apparatus would communicate by radio. These secret ink letters had been found by the Censorship

[40] This is at the end of NY —> Moscow readability and we do not have the Residency's next report.

[41] This discussion is based on documents in the Venona collection: 50–033, 52–051 [redacted] dated September 1952.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

Office during the investigation in the U.S. and Mexico of a network of Soviet agents working to free Trotsky's murderer (a KGB illegal) from a Mexican prison — the Venona view of this operation appears in a later chapter. The FCC intercepted radio transmissions believed to emanate from the Consulate in New York City during 1943, mostly test messages that were in the same book cipher used in the secret ink writings. A clandestine radio was also on the air from San Francisco between 30 June and 27 August 1943. Communications in one time pad were also observed.

A Venona example of KGB use of secret writing and book and other agent ciphers appears in NY —> Moscow, No. 1142, 10 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. The identified covernames in this message are as follows, those marked * were KGB agents, the others officers:

HOUSE (DOM): probably the Center
*KARLOS: Christian Casanova Subercaseaux
ShTOK: Mikhail A. Shalyapin
*MARGO: Margarita Nelken (with aliases)
*GARRI (HARRY): Jacob Epstein
LUKA: Pavel Klarin, sometime Resident in NYC and Mexico
TVEN (TWAIN): Semen Semenov

Covername ARTUR (ARTHUR), often mentioned in Venona in connection with operations between NYC and Latin America, has never been identified. The message:

**1. In accordance with a decision of the HOUSE, ChIZh and KARLOS before departure from TYRE [NYC] were instructed in the use of a reciphered code which they were to**

**[46 groups unrecoverable]**

**[D% alphabet] and in addition ChIZh was to write in English and KARLOS in Spanish. We cannot establish whether the pads for the codes were sent home since they were entered under the heading 'ChIZh's business' [4 groups unrecovered] there are no inventories. From TYRE no enciphered letters were sent to Ch. and K. Both codes ended up in ShTOK's hands.**

**2. For correspondence with ARTUR a book in the Spanish language 'Una Excursion a Los Indios Ranqueles' was used as a code.**

**3. For correspondence with ALEKSANDR the books 'My Sister Eileen' and 'Defense Will Not Win War' were used as codes.**[42]

**4. For correspondence with MARGO the book 'Opera' which was sent to you in accordance with your instructions, was used.**

**5. For correspondence with GARRI, KhUAN and ANITA books were used whose titles were not kept since they were destroyed after the departure of LUKA to [Mexico].**

**6. In a simple cipher square TVEN trained**

**[34 groups unrecoverable]**

[42] The reader will recall that the recovery of the latter title was one of Meredith Gardner's first book breaking successes in 1946 and the beginning of Venona exploitation.

**...ZUL, POL which were destroyed and for ShTABIST which we are dispatching to by the next regular post.**[43]

It seems unlikely that the New York Residency or its agents passed much intelligence to the Center via clandestine radio, though the Residency may have contacted its agents in this fashion. Likewise the secret writing links were most likely Agents <—> NYC rather than Agents <—> the Moscow Center.

The remainder of this section gives extracts of Venona intelligence bearing or targeting messages, the first group giving some good examples of materials sent by courier from the Residency to Moscow.[44]

"We Consider it Inexpedient to Send by Telegraph"

• NY —> Moscow, No. 854, 16 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR is an excellent example of a message describing what has been sent by courier or mail. GNOME was William Perl who had high level access to classified Air Force technology; ARSENIJ is the often mentioned Andrej Schevchenko; FOGEL (VOGEL) remains unidentified. Quoted in full:

> **By post No. 4 of 8th June of this year we dispatched material information about air units for new aircraft which have these units [units meaning equipment or some technical feature, rlb]. This material information deserves exceptional attention. Pay particular attention to it [D% in conjunction with] the information on analogous organizations engaged on a similar problem. The material information was received from GNOME and by ARSENIJ.**
>
> **By the same post were dispatched two secret plans of the layout of the ENORMOZ [atomic bomb] plant received from FOGEL.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1469, 17 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR gives a good idea of the work of Greg Silvermaster's (ROBERT's) net. The Residency outlines what U.S. documents have been photographed and will be forwarded to the Center. Some extracts from this message:

> **Today we received from ROBERT 56 undeveloped films including the following materials:**[46]

[43] POL may have had a connection to Alger Hiss and his net, probably in cryptography.

[44] The Residency often reports that the material has gone by "Post". Perhaps some material went out as controlled mail, i.e. carried by Russian aircraft and ships leaving the U.S. but not actually accompanied by a diplomatic courier. However, I do not know the specifics of these procedures.

[46] These 56 rolls of undeveloped film would have contained at least 2000 images.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

**[the message then highlighted 20 items, one sentence to each, on such matters as: a review of the economic condition of Nazi Germany, Lend Lease for the French, arrangements with Sweden, the situation in Italy, German assets in Spain.]**

• Some other ROBERT documents, to bulky to telegraph, are identified in two NY —> Moscow messages, No. 1751–1753, 13 December 1944, and No. 1821, 26 December 1944:

**ROBERT has passed on to us a secret document, 'The Post-War Troop Basis of the War Department' drawn up by [G–3] on the 19th of August.**

**To the document is attached an explanation of the same date in which it is said in particular that the document replaces a provisional document drawn up on the 24th of June.**

**The document was sent to you by post on the 8th of December.**

**Telegraph whether the contents of the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs' commentary of the 3rd of July on the 'Handbook on Civilian Affairs in Germany' should be telegraphed. The commentary was sent to you by the same post.**

**********

**ROBERT has passed on to us a 50 page Top Secret [War Production Board] report of the 1st of November about arms production in the COUNTRY consisting for the most part of figures. We consider it inexpedient to telegraph.**

• ALBERT's group was also forwarding bulk material to the Center, as described in NY —> Moscow, No. 1757, 14 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR:

**Advise which of the following secret materials of ALBERT's group which were sent to you by post no. 10 of 8th December should be sent to you by telegraph:**

**1. Information on the export of property from Germany to Spain.**

**2. On preparations for the distribution of relief in occupied Germany.**

**3. A tentative plan relating to international cartels**

**[and additional paragraphs on France and Germany, rlb]**

From time to time the Center gave some feedback, evaluating the intelligence received from New York. In the following example, Moscow —> NY, No. 298, 31 March 1945, from VIKTOR to ANTON, the Center uses New York courier shipment numbers for reference when evaluating information from agents ChARL'Z (Dr. Klaus Emil Fuchs) and MLAD (Theodore A. Hall) regarding the atomic bomb (ENORMOZ).[47] Some extracts from the message:

**We are sending herewith an evaluation on ENORMOZ. Referenced are materials from ChARLZ about the FUNICULAR.[48]**

**5/46 ..... gaskets**

**5/60 ..... contains an interesting method of calculation, which will be used during the design**

**5/62 .... technical data on the FUNICULAR**

[47] See Chapter XI.

[48] FUNICULAR: probably the gaseous diffusion plant K25 at Clinton, Tennessee.

**7/83, paragraph 1 – about the tests of the membrane offers substantial interest**

**7/84 paragraph 1 – about the tests of the membrane and information about the layout of the plant – is of interest. What is needed is .... plan of the plant.**

**7/83 and 7/84 – on the theory of the stability of the FUNICULAR – together with ChARLZ materials on this question received earlier they form a full and valuable piece of information.**

Military Information

Following are examples of collection of intelligence about U.S. military activities (including military technology, but excluding U.S. military intelligence).

• In two NY —> Moscow messages, No. 1017, 1022, 29–30 June 1943, and No. 1061.1062,1063, 3 July 1943, the Resident forwarded complicated statistical charts to the Center in message form. The opening of the first message:

**Documental information of the DEPOT [War Production Board] received from PAL [Greg Silvermaster] concerning the production of armaments in the COUNTRY, first figure in April; second in May 1943:**

**[the chart then lists production figures for various categories of aircraft, tanks, cannon, radar, smaller ships in two columns; many groups were not recovered, rlb]**

The second message:

**According to information of the administration of the Army Air Forces of the COUNTRY of 21 April this year which was received from AILERON [Abraham George Silverman of the Air Staff, rlb] through PAL [3 groups unrecovered]: Numerical strength of the Army Air Forces of the COUNTRY (the first figure in the COUNTRY, the second abroad):**

**[there follows a two column entry of strength figures for pilots, bombardiers etc, and following a long unreadable part the message seems to switch over to an accounting of Army personnel in fields other than the combat arms, e.g. engineers, military police.]**

Abraham George Silverman (AILERON) had particularly interesting connections. He served as a civilian on the Air Staff, especially with the Air Material Command, from 1942–1945, heading the Analysis and Plans Branch from August 1944. Silverman was the protege of Major General Bennett E. Meyers who had brought Silverman into the Air Force. Meyers, a major white collar criminal, secretly ran a company that did business with the Air Force. After the war he was charged with fraud, perjury, subornation of perjury, income tax evasion and bribery; he was then dismissed from the service, convicted on a number of the charges and served time in federal prison. No reference to Meyers has been found in Venona — in any case his fraudulent schemes netted him far more than the KGB could or would have paid.[49]

[49] In testifying before a Congressional Committee, Meyers gallantly observed that his company was not a front for illegally doing business with the Air Force, but was created for the purpose of carrying on his love affair with the wife of his principal business partner (before this revelation, Mrs. Meyers had testified to her husband's good character). Meyers also accused Generals Hap Arnold and Ira Eaker, Bernard Baruch and Howard Hughes of leading him astray. One outcome of this sorry case was the creation of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, with criminal and counterintelligence responsibility independent of local commands (early charges against Meyers had been ignored by the Air Force).

• Following are three examples of the accurate KGB reporting on U.S. military plans and status of combat forces, all NY —> Moscow, the first signed by the illegal MER, the signatures not recovered on the other two (but presumably by MAJ). External number and date given at top of each message:

**No. 1025, 1035–1036 30 June 1943**

**FRENK [Lawrence H. Duggan, State Dept.] reports the following:**

**In the near future the [U.S.] and the [UK] will land strong forces in Italy and on her islands with the aim of seizing the whole of Italy. The forces will be landed simultaneously at various points**

**[52 groups unrecovered]**

**[most of the message not recovered; however, the next paragraph concerns Army training in Alaska, 'for military operations in Norway this summer'. Preparations for operations against Nazi occupied Norway were a continuing Allied deception operation, rlb]**

**No. 927 1 July 1944**

**According to information of PAL, TUR, POLO:**

**1. ANVIL has been postponed until 15 August.**[50]

**[most of the message not recovered — some of it dealt with U.S. operations in the Pacific, e.g. Palau, Luzon and Formosa but also with Allied relations with De Gaulle, rlb]**

**No. 210 10 Feb 1945**

**After March 1st there will be in the [U.S.] only two divisions for deployment should the war in Europe keep on until this date**[51]

**[the remainder of this poorly recovered message summarizes U.S. forces available for Pacific operations, rlb]**

In the following four messages, New York is shown furnishing the Center with substantial information on U.S. progress in developing jet combat aircraft, a technological target second only to the atomic bomb.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 732, 20 May 1944 (signature not recovered) contains technical information provided by covername GNOME, who was William Perl an important technical intelligence asset of the KGB assigned to Langley Field and the Lewis Flight Propulsion Laboratory in Cleveland. Mr. and Mrs. Mikhail Sidorovich provided courier services in the loop: Perl —> Sidorovich —> Julius Rosenberg —> KGB KhU (tech intell) Line. The message:

**Data from GNOME about the JET assembly 19 A of the Westinghouse firm. The assembly [9 groups unrecovered] increase in speed. It consists of a compressor-internal combustion chamber-turbine. The exhaust nozzle with the cross-section regulated by a central cone. Data of the assembly:**

[50] PAL = Silvermaster; TUR = unidentified; POLO = Lud Ullman. ANVIL was the code-word for the Allied invasion of the south of France. The KGB agents got the date right.

[51] Again an accurate assessment: the U.S. had run out of manpower for new combat divisions and was just able to keep up with combat replacements. Events in the Pacific now became critical as the U.S. anticipated an invasion of Japan but did not have enough troops and planes unless the war in Europe could be finished. The information in this KGB message undoubtedly came from their agent Captain Lud Ullman, then on the Air Staff at the Pentagon. Ullman had also been the source for NY —> M, Nos.1721–1728, 8 December 1944, which quoted the Top Secret document "War Department Troop Deployment, 1 October 1944", that had been prepared by the Operations Division (G–3) of the General Staff. Gardner broke into that message in 1947; see Chapter IV.

**Weight dry – 850 pounds**
**Full length – 100 inches**
**Diameter of the installation – 19 inches**
**Compression ratio of the compressor – [ and etc., rlb]**

The other examples of jet plane messages are based on reporting from ARSENIJ at Bell Aircraft in Buffalo:

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1151, 12 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. Extracts from the message:

**At the end of July the Army and Navy distributed to aircraft firms of the COUNTRY new technical specifications on the construction of fighters having the [jet engine].**

**Specifications: speed 550 miles .... the total weight of the aircraft is not above 12000 pounds. A fighter of this type will be known as a 'fighter of the 600 miles per hour class.'**

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1152, 12 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. In this message ARSENIJ furnished technical information in much greater detail. Some extracts:

**The latest experimental model of the [jet engine] .... has :**

**1. 10 combustion chambers. The number of chambers has been reduced as a result of cutting down the fuel.**

**2. The ignition has been simplified. Sparking plugs have been left in only two chambers. All the chambers are connected together by tubes along which the flame is distributed to the other chambers. After combustion starts the ignition is switched off in all the chambers.**

- NY —> Moscow No. 1607–1608, 16 November 1944, ANTON to VIKTOR concerns tech transfer and shows the excellent liaison ARSENIJ had established. The messages shows how much information the manufacturers and the U.S. military were willing to openly share with the Russians. Quoted in full with a number of names withheld:

**Having the [instructions of General Rudenko of the Soviet Government Purchasing Commission] about going on the mission ARSENIJ proceeded to the plant to prepare materials and tools for strengthening fuselages. It had become known to the management of the plant that ARSENIJ might be leaving. The director of the firm, BELL, invited ARSENIJ in and proposed to him that he should discuss with [MOSCOW] his [BELL's,] desire:**

**1. To sell us new plans of new jet engines which are being developed:**

**(a) a twin-engine fighter with a speed of 575 mph.**

**(b.) a shorter-range single-engine fighter with a speed of 580 mph.**

**(c.) a single-engine trainer with a speed of 500 mph.**

**2. These aircraft will be equipped with a new electronic automatic pilot. It will work for any type of flying and at any angle of dive. All the devices automatically record their readings. The devices are patented by the firm [6 groups unrecoverable] P–59 equipped with an automatic pilot were carried out on 4th November in the presence of the senior command staff of Navy Department, the Air Force, Wright Field, the [the National**

**Advisory Committee for Aeronautics][52] and the British. The results were excellent. ARSENIJ, at BELL's invitation, was present at the trials. The proposed aircraft are as good as the P–80 according to BELL. BELL is prepared to hand ARSENIJ preliminary information before he leaves.**

**3. Besides this he will hand over three copies of a drawing of a new five-seater helicopter, a photograph and a technical film for showing in [Moscow]. If these are of interest BELL can fly to MOSCOW (he has an invitation). B. added, 'If we do business I will be your technical advisor.' When asked what this meant, he replied, 'You must guess what it means'.**

**4. At the plant, ARSENIJ is acquainted with an engineer, H. [name withheld], who has been through special government courses on the jet system. On one of A. and KOROBOV's[53] visits to H. on official business a conversation was struck up about the diagram of a jet which was on the office wall. H. having closed the door, [he] produced from the safe a detailed drawing of the I–16 and gave a full description and particulars. Further H. proposed buying one of the inventions – a small jet unit constructed on the basis of the turbo-compressor of the Wright and Pratt–Whitney engines. The output of this unit additionally**

**[43 groups unrecoverable]**

**For this purpose he is giving A. before he leaves a photo of the I–16 jet unit in a sealed envelope. H.'s trip can be organized jointly with that of the ALLISON representative concerning the water-injection unit in the engines of the P–63 aircraft of which we have about 500. All the above-mentioned is worthy of note and alters the situation concerning A.'s mission. I request your consent to A.'s flight and an immediate answer to the questions raised.[54]**

## Political and Economic Targeting and Reporting

This subsection contains a wide selection of examples of KGB coverage of political and economic targets, excluding a group of messages that I have selected for the chapter on the White House. Most of the following concern international affairs.

- NY —> Moscow, No. 931–932, 17 June 1943, LUKA to VIKTOR shows the wide-ranging access that ZAYaTs (meaning HARE or STOWAWAY), who was Maurice Halperin of the OSS, had to U.S. diplomatic papers. A summary of the message:

- Halperin reported that according to OSS Algiers, General Georges had arrived in Algiers from France on 6 May.

- Halperin reported on communications between the Sate Department and the U.S. ambassadors in Turkey and China (and other countries — but identification and text not recovered). The information from Turkey concerned the situation in Romania, a country of particular interest to Russia.

[52] AELERON was the KGB's man inside this organization.

[53] KOROBOV = Nikolaj P. Ostrovskij, KGB officer

[54] It will be recalled (see the previous chapter) that Moscow wanted to transfer ARSENIJ from Buffalo to New York for reasons not stated in Venona.

• Halperin also reported on the "adversaries of SIKORSKI" [55], but most of this section of the message is unrecovered.

Eastern Europe and the Balkans

Reporting on Eastern Europe and the Balkans came from many sources, not only agents in the U.S. but also unwitting sources or unrecruited sympathizers. One of the latter, L. (name withheld) a New York City lawyer and banker, had long-time connections to the Communist Party, but he is found in Venona only by his true name, though he would seem to have been a valuable recruitment.[56] This message, NY —> Moscow, No. 1141, 13 July 1944 is too scrappily recovered to quote in full; some extracts, the bullets are mine:

> • **L. [name withheld], 58–60 years old, American, chief [1 group unrecovered] of the [name withheld] Bank, was formerly a deputy director of this bank.**
>
> • **favorably disposed —— In the 1930s in the USSR**
>
> • **In the last conversation he told GUSEV [president of AMTORG in NYC] that there would be major developments not only in the immediate reconstruction of industry, but also [20 groups unrecovered] American and British troops. These troops are preparing the ground for subversive operations 'without dependence on Turkey's position.'**

"lost in a taxi"

Another unrecruited source (at least no covername is given), Jan Papanek, head of the Czech Information Service in New York City is the primary source for a message about the plans of Free Hungary — information acquired in a fantastic way and then reported in a message that is almost impossible to understand (more than 100 groups unrecovered or unrecoverable, but the meaning of the message might not clarify if all groups had been recovered and translated). This message, MAJ to VIKTOR, NY —> Moscow, Nos. 1669–1672, 1674–1675, 29–30 November 1944 opens this way:

> **PAPANEK has passed on to SERGEJ [KGB officer] an English translation of a note in Hungarian which Tibor ECKHART [president of the executive committee of 'International Organization for an Independent Hungary'] lost in a taxi among a number of other documents. The driver of the taxi handed the find over to the KhATA [FBI] and the latter through IZBA [OSS] entrusted the translation to a Hungarian (we will try to get his name) from VAMBERY's group [VAMBERY led another Free Hungary group in NYC] who then passed the translation on to PAPENEK. The note, dated the 27th of October and written in ECKHARDT's own handwriting , says:**
>
> **[impossible to summarize; unwilling to quote, rlb]**

[aside from the note, Tibor Eckhart had lost other papers too, including some notes relating to loose lips, and even a ship]:

[55] General Sikorski headed the Polish government-in-exile in London.

[56] Of course he might be in Venona as one of the unidentified covernames — but in this message we do not see the usual formulas of asking Moscow for a name check and approval to recruit, and the assignment of a cover name.

**James WARBURG....[57] A Swiss banker drew U.'s attention to the fact that J.V. related this fact in a loud voice to two persons traveling by train from Washington to NY. Half the carriage could hear. U rang W[ashington?] to hold back SCHMIDT. He was taken off the ship....**

MAJ's own analysis and commentary on the Eckhardt papers are no less complicated but are quite interesting. Some extracts:

**.... after HORTHY's broadcast of the 15th of October with the aim of reviving the 'Independent Hungary' movement and the eventual formation of a Hungarian government or [2 groups unrecovered] 'Committee of Emissaries'[58]**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**with HORTHY's people for founding a new movement. In view of HORTHY's tactlessness the talks came to an end and E[CKHARDT] returned to WASHINGTON. In analyzing these notes these talks must be borne in mind as it is possible that there is a connection between them. Point by point:**

**1. Evidently this communication [ i.e., some of the papers lost in the taxi] was intended for HORTHY and someone gave it to E[CKHARDT] to transmit to BUDAPEST. E. could have sent it in particular through Count Gabor BETHLEN (former counselor of the mission in ROME, .... son of the former Prime Minister), George PATHY ( a shipowner in Anglo–Egyptian Steamship Line), Frank DEAK (professor of Columbia University, now in ROME where he has gone as representative of Pan–American Airways), Andrew FREY (a journalist at present in ISTANBUL), George BARCZA (at present in GENEVA, connected with HORTHY through the Hungarian envoy at the Vatican, Baron Gabor APOR and finally in a disguised form through the Swedish mission which represents the interests of Hungary**

**[29 groups unrecovered]**

**[hundreds of groups later, but not quite at the end, MAJ states]:**

**According to the information of a source, the KhATA (FBI) has already taken up the investigation of E.**

Of course the originals of these materials — except for MAJ's notes — are available for further study of the confused situation in late-war Hungary.[59]

Three more samples of reporting on Eastern European/Balkan issues: one message each concerning Poland, Yugoslavia and Roumania as reported by three different KGB agents:

---

[57] James Warburg, an American banker and author was deputy director of the Office of War Information 1942–1944; he might also be the 'J.V.' mentioned thereafter. The 'U' might be a person with an alias 'Upjack' who appears in one of the papers lost in the taxi and who had some connection to Lisbon and Hungary (probably a Jewish refugee).

[58] Admiral Miklos Horthy was the Regent of Hungary and the chief of state from 1919 until 1944, when the Germans arrested him and occupied Budapest.

[59] Neither the recoverable part of the papers, as given in Venona, nor MAJ's lengthy commentary, directly mention the plight of the Hungarian Jews. However, that is quite likely at issue i.e., the involvement of PATHY, a rich Hungarian Jew living in Alexandria, Egypt; the reference to the representational work of Sweden. To my knowledge, Venona contains no mention of Raoul Wallenberg.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 759, 760, 27 May 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. This message though poorly recovered shows the work of Polish-born, American citizen, Boleslaw Gebert, covername: ATAMAN in reporting information to the KGB on the activities of ethnic groups and personalities of interest to the Russians. Gebert had been one of the leading Polish–American communists from the 1920s and a member of the Central Committee of the American Communist Party in 1937–38. In this extract Gebert reports on Professor Oscar Lange and others:

> **[42 groups unrecoverable] circles of the [U.S.] consider LANGE a leading figure in the sphere of Soviet Polish relations. His weak point is an inadequate notion of [2 groups unrecovered]..... Contacts and acquaintances of LANGE: American, Russian and Polish Social Democrats such as Norman THOMAS, DAN [u/i covername], Tadeuz HOINKO, formerly secretary to the Polish American Council, at present advisor to the Polish Information Center. Czechs BENES, MASARYK, PAPANEK and others.[60]LOTsMAN [Vice President Henry Wallace], KULIKOWSKI, ZOLTOWSKI and other Polish figures. IMPERIALIST [Walter Lippmann], DON [u/i covername] and other journalists.**

ATAMAN/Gebert also evaluated the Kosciusko League and its relevance to Polish–Soviet relations and commented on the "EHRLICH Affair", but unfortunately not much else is recovered on that affair (in which the KGB had executed Polish patriots Henryk Erlich (or Ehrlich) and Viktor Alter on the charge that they had carried out pro-Hitler agitation among Soviet troops).

NY —> Moscow, No. 1437, 10 October 1944, to the 8th Department is one of many reports about Yugoslavia obtained from classified U.S. documents. In this message, ZAYaTs (Maurice Halperin) reported the contents of a telegram to the State Department from their representative Bari, Italy:

> **ZAYaTs reports that a telegram from BARI of 25 September has arrived in the BANK [State Department], in which is discussed the introduction by TITO of strict regulations governing the movements and activities of the military missions of the [U.S.] and the [UK]. In the telegram it is stated that the [UK] has replied by stopping supplies to the Partisans and evacuation of the wounded. The telegram considers that the probable cause of the introduction of strict measures is TITO's intention to conceal from the missions the present control that he exercises over the whole country.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1789, 19 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR contains a report from ROBERT relating to post-war Roumania:

> **According to ROBERT's information the [U.S.'s] advisor in CASERTA [in Italy] considers that Roumania will be able to pay reparations of 300 million dollars and that she will [3 groups unrecovered] 55 percent of her export surpluses to the Soviet Union in the course of six years.**

## Some Economic Intelligence

Three NY —> Moscow messages from May 1944 report on economic matters, two refer to oil and one to a variety of economic matters:

[60] Eduard Benes had been President of the Czech Republic and may have been a KGB agent; Jan Masaryk was the son of the founder of the Czech Republic and is believed to have been murdered by the KGB after the Communist takeover in 1948.

• No. 622, 4 May 1944, from MAJ. Here New York reports some of the complaints of their difficult agent, TALENT, William Malisoff, who was discussed earlier in this chapter. TALENT claimed to have provided important information on petroleum research and development:

> **ANTON has informed TALENT of the impossibility of large-scale one-time aid. Just as we expected, TALENT took this information morbidly. TALENT considers that his request has not been conveyed to the leadership of the HOUSE [probably the Center]. He declared that the refusal to help him set up a laboratory or manufacturing business has been repeated several times. He approached GENNADIJ, STOCK and ANTON.[61] With irritation he stated that the materials handed over by him on one question alone – oil, by his estimate had yielded the Union a saving of millions during the past years and the aid requested by him was trifling.**

Whether or not TALENT's intelligence on oil was worth "millions", he was difficult to handle, and as we have seen, the KGB came to believe he might be a double agent. He must have been producing good information as the KGB met with him regularly for many years.[62]

• No. 744, 746, 24 May 1944, a poorly recovered message from MAJ to VIKTOR reports economic and political information from FRENK (Lawrence Duggan) including:

> **[about 283 groups unrecovered] the British, Near–Eastern, European, post-war, trade and oil questions. The creation of an oil commission of representatives of the [U.S.] and the [UK] for deciding world oil questions. [2 groups unrecovered] oil conference our participation**
>
> **KAPITAN [President Roosevelt] is badly afraid of the possibility of China's withdrawal from the war. LOTsMAN's [V.P. Henry Wallace] main task is to persuade China to see the war through and to strengthen friendship with the [U.S.].**

• No. 655, 9 May 1944, to the 8th Department shows ROBERT at his best, reporting on numerous economic-political matters of great interest to the Russians:

> **PAL advises:**
>
> **1. According to the information of the F.E.A. on 22nd April the [British] gave up the plan of invading the Balkans, preferring to await the total defeat [1 group unrecovered], and after that rapidly occupy Greece and Yugoslavia.**
>
> **2. The BANK [State Department] is inclined to approve the USSR's intention to remove industrial equipment from Germany to replace what was destroyed. The BANK considers desirable and possible to exact reparations from Germany for 10 years. Only after this does it think it possible to allow Germany to begin the reconstruction of her own industry.**
>
> **3. [The Finnish Minister in Washington] in conversations with various highly placed representatives of the LEAGUE [U.S. government] is indicating that Finland is unable to pay [1 group unrecovered] the USSR 120 million dollars in reparations.**

[61] GENNADIJ = Gajk Ovakimian, the pre-war KGB Resident in New York; ANTON and STOCK being the familiar KGB officers Leonid Kvasnikov and Mikhail A. Shalyapin.

[62] He might also have been a good con artist. A pre-war PhD candidate at Columbia University, he was expelled for faking laboratory work. During 1943–45 he owned Unified Laboratories, through which he had defense contracts for research in lubricants and biochemistry. Venona does not show if the KGB did in fact relent and fund this business.

**4. The master of the COUNTRY HOUSE [U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union] in a telegram to the BANK on 15th April advised that the Soviet Government does not want to make any concessions in the talks about a loan. He considers it more in the interests of the [U.S.] to conclude an agreement about a loan than to wait for the end of the war.**[63]

**5. NABOB [Treasury Secretary Morgenthau] has decided to present to KAPITAN [FDR] a plan for a post-war trade agreement with us.**

Open Source Research by the KGB

In NY —> Moscow, No. 1052, 1066–1067, 2–4 July 1943, LUKA to VIKTOR, the Residency gave a very long account of the career and views of Eddie Rickenbacker, who had been invited to visit the Soviet Union. This was based almost entirely on open source research, beginning with Rickenbacker's entry in Who's Who, followed by a review of his speeches, "against the Roosevelt administration, trade unions and FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN [members of the Communist Party]"; then extracts from a pamphlet by a writer for the Daily Worker, which called attention to Rickenbacker's alleged support of the Ku Klux Klan, summaries of articles from the Catholic magazine Commonweal, highlights from speeches by his admirers and detractors. The last part of the message said:

**[3 groups unrecovered] conversation with us ZVUK [Jacob Golos] tried to discover the reason for Rickenbacker's being allowed into the USSR.**

**[25 groups unrecovered]**

**LINDBERGH.**

Golos and the rest of the KGB need not have worried: Rickenbacker came back from his visit full of praise for the Soviet Union, making remarks he might not have liked to read in later years.

"AIDA sheds light only on the RATS"

NY —> Moscow, No. 640, 6 May 1944, from MAJ is a particularly obnoxious targeting message, quoted in full, concerning the work of Esther Trebach Rand, covername AIDA:

**HUDSON [u/i covername] proposes to place AIDA as administrative secretary to the Committee of Jewish Writers and Artists, where she will be able to expand her opportunities for using Jewish organizations and prominent figures. Working as she does now**

**with the United Palestine Appeal, AIDA sheds light only on the RATS. Sanction AIDA's shift to the new work.**

As noted earlier, RATS = Zionists. Interesting to note, the GRU dismissed all its Jewish officers after the war and the KGB began to do the same.

EEI From Moscow

Here are two excellent Venona examples of important EEI levied by Moscow on the New York Residency.

- Moscow —> New York, No. 195, 3 March 1945, from VIKTOR:

[63] The KGB was getting inside information on the best terms for loans from their agent Harry D. White, assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury and later Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. Treasury was thoroughly penetrated by the KGB.

**At the forthcoming meeting with ALBERT pass on to him on our behalf the following task:**

**Jointly with ROBERT take all requisite steps to obtain in good time and pass on to us information about the composition of the delegation to the forthcoming [UN] conference which is in BABYLON [San Francisco] [5 groups unrecovered]; what tactics the delegation intends to adopt, whom it is counting on for support, what blocs have been prepared already and formed, how far there will be a united line for the representatives of the Anglo-Saxon world and so on. As the information comes in pass it on to the Center by telegraph without delay.**

Moscow —> New York, No. 217, 10 March 1945, from VIKTOR.[64]

**In view of the assignment of work on the old and new Russian and nationalist emigres, the Russian, Armenian and Mohammedan clergy, Trotskyites and Zionists, with regard to these targets we require you in the future:**

**1. To communicate all urgent materials by telegraph.**

**2. To send by post, with each letter beginning a fresh**

**[23 groups unrecovered]**

**translate or write brief review and send us by post only documents of operational interest. By the first post send brief notes on the above targets in your country with specific proposals for dealing with them. Advise by telegraph about persons ear-marked for recruitment, in order to obtain permission. Confirm receipt of this telegram.**

Local Dissemination of Intelligence to the GRU

Only rarely did MAJ or the other New York Residents make suggestions about local dissemination of intelligence information collected by the Residency's nets. Very little Washington material is readable, therefore we do not have much on dissemination to the Ambassador. In late July 1944, MAJ sent two messages to Moscow concerning his relations with the GRU Residency in New York, and he raised the matter of sharing intelligence information:[65]

**No. 1052 26 July 1944**

**As CHEMIST has been appointed head man not only of THE TEN but also of two of the NEIGHBOR's [GRU's] groups he has raised the question of why they are always expressing dissatisfaction and by endless chatter about 'ours' and 'yours' promoting the divergence of all three groups**

**[28 groups unrecovered]**

**liaison with us. [2 groups unrecovered] this is just bad for KONSPIRATsIYa [security]. I do not request the NEIGHBOR about this as he is very jealous and would not do anything about it.**

**No. 1065 28 July 1944**

[64] Actually this message was a circular to four Residencies: New York, Mexico City, Paris, and one other unidentified station.

[65] The New York KGB did work with the GRU on certain operational matters, e.g. surveillance, technical countermeasures and technical assistance.

**Please advise whether information on the COUNTRY's [the U.S.'s] war production and war effort should be brought to the notice of the head NEIGHBOR [the GRU Resident] of course without indicating the source. You are aware of the danger of people possibly being sent to check our sources. Moreover, the lack of exchange of information with the NEIGHBOR here does not contribute, in my view, to our friendly relations; nevertheless, I have not yet established relations with him.**

HOMER's Information

In NY —> Moscow, No. 1146, 10 August 1944, MAJ answered one of Moscow's typical complaints or accusations (Moscow's message not available), this time in connection with reporting intelligence from HOMER, Donald MacLean:

**Your Number 3608. HOMER's information was transmitted not in our words and without comments. It was transmitted in a condensed form word for word without any personal conclusions.**

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# XV. THE TRUE BELIEVERS: JUDITH COPLON (COVERNAME; SIMA) AND FLORA WOVSCHIN (COVERNAME; ZORA)

## A. Background

**Judith Coplon, covername SIMA. The KGB's agent in the Justice Department.**

Judith Coplon, born 17 May 1921 in New York City, graduated from Barnard College in 1943 and went to work for the Justice Department in New York, transferring to Washington in early 1945. Early Venona decrypts led to her identification as a KGB agent. The FBI put together one of the largest operations in Bureau history, eventually arresting her at a meet with her KGB contact with classified information in her possession. The Venona source was protected during the prosecution and Coplon was convicted on espionage charges in separate trials in Washington in 1949 and New York in 1950. Her New York conviction was reversed on appeal and the Washington case remanded for a hearing. The government did not renew the prosecution though there had never been any question of her guilt (the reversal/remand resulted from questions about warrants and investigative technique — but Venona was never hinted at). Bob Lamphere has written a definitive account of the investigation and trial, and the Director NSA (Admiral Inman) permitted him to make limited reference to the Venona source (the same for his account of the Rosenberg case).

Flora Don Wovschin born 23 February 1920 in New York City, divided her college years between the University of Wisconsin 1939–40; 1941–February 1942, and Barnard College, 1940–41 and 1942–43. During 1943–45 she worked for: TASS News Agency, United Nations Information Office, Office of War Information, Justice Department (Economic Warfare Section), and the State Department. She resigned from the latter in September 1945.

Wovschin was from a Communist family. Her step-father, Enos Regnet Wicher had been a Communist Party official in Wisconsin and was given the KGB covername KIN in early 1945. A Venona message of 17 July 1945 makes it apparent that he was a KGB agent. Flora Don's mother, Maria Wicher, KGB covername DAShA was also a party member. After her services to the KGB in the U.S., Flora Don Wovschin married a Russian and left the country in 1946. Reportedly she later went to North Korea (!) as a nurse and died there in the early 1950s.

B. The Venona Traffic

Judith Coplon, covername SIMA has been found in Venona 17 times, three times Moscow —> New York and the remainder NY —> Moscow. Fourteen of these could be sufficiently broken out to be published as translations. The unpublished messages, with the cryptanalytic worksheet numbers noted at end of each reference:

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

All of the published messages on SIMA/Coplon will appear in this chapter.

Flora Don Wovschin, covername ZORA has been found in Venona 21 times with 19 translations made. Eleven of the latter are also Coplon/SIMA messages. As my purpose is to highlight their connection – and of course Coplon is the more interesting because of the notoriety and controversy surrounding the case, I have not given the text of the exclusively ZORA messages.

The messages are presented in date order:

1. NY —>M, No. 1014, 20 July 1944, signed by MAJ. In this message Coplon already has the covername SIMA, though not yet formally recruited. The original mention(s) of Coplon is therefore in an unbroken message.

> **Your telegram No. 3028 [not available]**
>
> **SIMA works for the Economic Section of the military department of the Ministry of Justice [i.e. the Economic Warfare section, Justice Department, rlb]. This office essentially concerns itself with the economic and political spheres of the Department of Justice and**
>
> **[45 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **office since [11 groups unrecovered] ZORA cannot restrain her from this. If we are interested in the materials of S.'s office then it is necessary to put through her recruitment. We have checked S. on the [b%] preliminary] matters and again request your sanction for her recruitment. Telegraph a decision.**

2. NY —> Moscow, No. 1050, 26 July 1944, signed by MAJ. SIMA and ZORA get only brief mentions in this testy message, but it contains considerable information on Residency operations and is quoted in full:[1]

> **1. You did not answer the main point. Since you do not give any instructions on the assignment of ShTOK's people or on KATYA's successor we are compelled to propose the following temporary solution which is by no means satisfactory to the OFFICE [the Residency]: gradually**
>
> **[38 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **[D% KAVALERIST].**
>
> **BEN, who is in touch with STUKACh's wife, we can turn over to STUKACh, <u>ZORA and SIMA temporarily put on ice</u> [emphasis added, rlb]. DLINNIJ with your sanction will be turned over to SVET.**

[1] Most of the covernames are KGB officers; unidentified covernames BEN, DLINNIJ and perhaps LEG would seem to be agents. STUKACh = Joseph (Jack) Katz.

**2. Until the new people who are going to take over ShTOK's probationers arrive it is clear that Sh. ought to stay here, that is until about September. Katya is leaving in August and if meanwhile JULIA does not arrive LINA will have to carry out the duties of operational secretary.**

**3. Do you consider it advisable to turn one or other of Sh.'s probationers, for instance, ZORA, over to [b% LEG]?**

**4. We have got in touch with NAZAR. By post you advised that NAZAR would be employed on the second line but he himself says that he was entrusted with the first and third lines. Which is right? Furthermore, recently you telegraphed that we were to put probationers of the colony on ice until the arrival of a special worker, but by post you ask whom we can nominate for this work. Does it mean that in spite of the seriousness of the situation you do not intend to send anybody?**

**5. As ShTOK's and ShAKh's departure is imminent please in any case orient me on what the prospects are for making good the OFFICE's complement of personnel. One hopes that in the sphere of personnel one will not have to employ oneself in squaring the circle.**

3. NY —> Moscow, No. 1385, 1 October 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. This poorly recovered message is almost exclusively concerned with Yugoslav matters, but at the end (after a gap of 61 groups unrecoverable):

**had in all two very brief meetings with ZORA as a consequence of the tailing. Furthermore, fearing unpleasantness on the part of the KhATA [FBI], SIMA is for the time being avoiding meetings with ZORA.**

4. NY —> Moscow, No. 1587, 12 November 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. Covername URAL in the following is clearly a KGB officer, possibly Nikolaj Karpekov:

**Before putting ZORA into URAL's hands (the transfer has been delayed because of the unfavorable election atmosphere) telegraph not later than the 15th November agreement to a personal conversation with her by NAZAR upon my detailed instruction. This conversation I consider absolutely necessary for the following reasons:**

**1. ZORA's morale is extremely unsatisfactory.**

**2. Her communication that in her apartment are lying a lot of materials that she is supposed to [d% turn over] to us but up to now has not had an opportunity (the reasons she does not indicate).**

**3. SIMA is quite dissatisfied with the fact that she was promised a personal talk with our man and there has been no talk notwithstanding.**[2]

**4. ZORA is asking for additional instructions about her and SIMA's conduct in relation to their work and personal connections.**

**I consider that URAL will not be able to cope with such a task all at once. I shall give ZORA instructions on the basis of a [d% detailed] memorandum which [she?] has just sent and which I shall send to you by the next regular post.**

5. NY — Moscow, No. 1637, 21 November 1944, to VIKTOR has only a brief mention of SIMA and ZORA. Covernames DICK and CZECH are, respectively, Bernie Schuster and Robert Owen Menaker:

[2] This suggests that so far Coplon had been handled by KGB agents —ZORA at least — rather than KGB regulars from the Residency.

**1. For your information we advise that GIRGORIJ has taken on DICK in technical liaison. Before his departure in December of this year he will also take on CZECH.**

**2. SIMA in August of this year [1 group unrecovered] wrote ZORA a penitent note**

**[33 groups unrecoverable]**

6. NY —> Moscow, No. 1714, 5 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. This interesting message introduces a new recruit, covername LU, and describes the tribulations of a communist family (ZORA, her step-father and her mother):

**As a result of two detailed conversations with ZORA on such questions [4 groups unrecovered] NAZAR arrived at the conviction that ZORA, despite her youth, is extremely serious, well-developed and understands her tasks.**

**[39 groups unrecovered]**

**[URAL?] only rarely meeting her personally. Skilled leadership is all the more important now that through ZORA we are processing and are counting on drawing into active work SIMA and M. [name withheld, rlb] (henceforth LU).[3]**

**2. To orient ZORA on transferring to the BANK, KhUTOR, IZBA[4] or another analogous establishment (the RADIO STATION[5] according to what she says is beginning to wind up its work and in half a year will probably cease independent existence). The majority of the materials that ZORA turned over to us earlier were not of interest because ZORA's subject in the RADIO STATION is poor in opportunities for our line.[6]**

**3. The time is ripe for signing on SIMA; after careful preparation through NAZAR to entrust the carrying out of it to ZORA. ZORA enjoys the full confidence of SIMA on whose readiness to work if only she is told whither her materials are going casts no doubt (SIMA guesses whither).**

**4. To entrust to ZORA after LU gets work of interest to us (ZORA all the time is aiming LU at this) the gradual preparation of LU's signing on.**

**5. To decide the question of direct liaison between the Office [Residency] and SIMA and LU (by-passing ZORA) depending on the outcome of the two signings on.**

**6. Inasmuch as ZORA's mother (DAShA) and stepfather's reactions to their compulsory isolation from the progressive movement are having a bad effect on ZORA's own mood, to entrust BEK with carrying out in a cautious manner a special explanatory conversation with them. DAShA knows about ZORA's work for us.**

**We have taken measures for the rapid unburdening of ZORA of the materials which have accumulated. In case of emergency, arrangements have been made at her request for her to get in touch with the Office itself.**

---

[3] This sentence contains two stock tradecraft items: the KGB use of the word OFORMLYaEM, here translated as "processing" and the formula, "[true name] henceforth [covername]".

[4] BANK = State Department; KhUTOR = the Foreign Economic Administration; IZBA = OSS

[5] RADIO STATION = the Office of War Information

[6] "opportunities for our line" is another example of the sometimes ambiguous use of the term "Line".

7. NY —> Moscow, No. 1845, 31 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR announces that SIMA has gotten employment in a prime target area:

**ZORA advises:**

**1. SIMA has got work in the Registration of Foreign Agents Branch of the War Office Division of the Department of Justice. Further [b% investigation]**

**[53 groups unrecoverable]**

**[Remainder of message unrelated to SIMA/ZORA]**

8. NY —> Moscow, No. 27, 8 January 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR. This message puts Judith Coplon directly in touch with a senior KGB officer, and she acknowledges that she knows who she will be working for. MAJ reports that this recruitment gives the KGB access to the CI work of the FBI. SERGEJ = Vladimir Pravdin, MAJ's assistant or co-Resident, under cover as senior TASS representative. Quoted in full:

**SERGEJ's conversation with SIMA took place on [b% 4 January]. SIMA gives the impression of being a serious person who is politically well developed and there is no doubt of her sincere desire to help us. She had no doubts about whom she is working for and said that the nature of the materials in which we are interested pointed to the fact that it was our country which was in question. She was very satisfied that she was dealing with us and said that she deeply appreciated the confidence shown in her and understood the importance of our work.**

**SIMA's transfer to a new job was made at the insistence of her [d% superiors]**

**[64 groups unrecoverable]**

**generalizing materials from all departments. SIMA will probably start work on 15 February.**

**On the basis of this preliminary information there is reason to assume that in her new job SIMA will be able to carry out very important work for us in throwing light on the activities of the KhATA [FBI]. The fruitfulness of her work will to a considerable extent depend upon our ability to organize correct and constant direction. It should be remembered that SIMA from an operational point of view is quite undeveloped and she will need time to learn conspiracy and to correctly gain an understanding of the questions which interest us.**

**A final decision on the question of direction and liaison can be taken [b% only] after she has moved to CARTHAGE [Washington] when it will be ascertained [b% specifically] what her new job consists of.**

9. NY —> Moscow, No. 55, 15 January 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR contains five internal messages, the two of interest to this chapter are quoted in full:

**LU has received orders from the CABARET [Office of the Coordinator of Inter–American Affairs] to take up work in CARTHAGE [Washington] on 11 January. In connection with this, work out the sending of a letter of recommendation from YURIJ [the KGB Resident in Mexico City] or sanction signing LU on through ZORA. Since LU is beginning to work it is extremely important to direct her efforts from the very beginning along a line which we need and for this direct contact and leadership are necessary.**

**Your telegram 138. Telegram no. 22 reported in detail about the results of SERGEJ's meeting with SIMA. We will telegraph additional information later.**

10. NY —> Moscow, No. 76, 17 January 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR, a poorly recovered message quoted in full:

**1. ZORA received**

**[25 groups unrecovered]**

**prefers to work in TYRE [NYC] or CARTHAGE [Washington]. ZORA replied CARTHAGE. At the same time**

**[22 groups unrecoverable]**

**[SIMA][7] was very satisfied with her conversation with SERGEJ who [4 groups unrecovered].**

**3. ZORA's stepfather (henceforth KIN]**

**[144 groups unrecovered]**

11. Moscow —> NY, No. 268, 24 March 1945 : the first instructions from the Center about SIMA that have been recovered in Venona. A poorly recovered message:

**First**

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**Let ZORA [d% meet]**

**[12 groups unrecovered]**

**to ZORA on**

**[27 groups unrecovered]**

**2. Since SERGEJ's departure for BABYLON [San Francisco] will cause a break in the liaison with SIMA, we propose that she be handed over to URAL for technical liaison.[8] Warn URAL about being extremely careful in meeting SIMA. Point out to SIMA that her main task is to consolidate her hold on the new work in the CLUB [Justice Dept.]. Therefore, at first, she should not be active in acquiring [c% new contacts]**

**[59 groups unrecovered]**

[the remainder of the message very poorly recovered except that the familiar covernames ROBERT and JULIA were found — probably unconnected to SIMA, rlb]

12. Moscow —> New York, No. 286, 284, 28 March 1945, signature unrecoverable. This message is a blast from Moscow — the Center was outraged at ZORA's, and the Residency's, poor operational security practices. SIMA has a relatively minor position in the message, except that the Center is concerned that ZORA is endangering her. This message is well-recovered, though important parts are missing and some of the specifics are obscure. This is one of the most interesting messages in Venona:

**With Post No. 1 were received ZORA's reports in which there are the following facts which deserve serious attention:**

[7] Only the last digit of this group was available. This broke out to the letter "A". The context made it clear that this was SIMA.

[8] URAL = KGB officer Nikolaj P. Karpakov, under SGPC cover.

**1. In the report of 2 February 1945 in 2 pages, she, describing the situation concerning the change of working location, names institutions of the COUNTRY [U.S.] by the code designations adopted by us for our telegraphic and written correspondence – CLUB, BANK, CABARET.[9]**

**2. In the reports of 1 and 3 February ZORA several times mentions the words BANK, CABARET, HOUSE [The Center], CLUB. It is not a question about communications which have been [2 groups unrecovered] in the OFFICE [Residency] in which you filled in the prearranged designations, but about [1 group unrecovered] written personally by ZORA nos. 8, 10, 111, 112.[10]**

**3. In the report of [1 group unrecovered] January 1945 ZORA in detail sets forth the following story: SIMA's chief, WOOLWORTH[11] from the Military Department of the CLUB entrusted ZORA with finding out in her**

**[31 groups unrecovered]**

**was such an informer. ZORA gave**

**[19 groups unrecovered]**

**John DUNNING [3 groups unrecovered]. To DUNNING's question whether [c% she] was interested in this information [1 group unrecovered] the BANK, ZORA answered that another institution, whose name she had been forbidden to disclose, was interested in the information and that this other institution would get in touch with him. A member of the Military Department of SIMA's institution Alexander SACKS in a conversation with ZORA [2 groups unrecovered] about the proposal**

**[10 groups unrecovered]**

**by him declined. SACKS gave ZORA the task of trying to get in the RADIO STATION[12] materials about Swiss–German financial operations [c% and]**

**[38 groups unrecoverable]**

**To ZORA's question to SACKS and WOOLWORTH, why they are not receiving material from the RADIO STATION through an official representative, [2 groups unrecovered] institutions of the COUNTRY including the BANK, WOOLWORTH is trying to [c% seek**

---

[9] CLUB = Justice Department; BANK = State Department; CABARET = Office of the Coordinator of Inter–American Affairs.

[10] The Center is making the point that ZORA, in the reports to the KGB that she has personally written, is using KGB coverterms such as BANK and HOUSE, terms that an agent should not know. However, Elizabeth Bentley knew her communications covername, GOOD GIRL (UMNITSA) and the communications covername for one of the Residents. KGB officers undoubtedly used these institutional coverterms in their operational conversations.

[11] WOOLWORTH was the Venona group's transliteration of VUL'VORT, the name given in the message. Subsequent investigation suggested this was probably an error by the KGB or ZORA as Robert M. WOHLFORTH was at that time chief of the Economic Warfare Section, Department of Justice.

[12] RADIO STATION = Office of War Information

**out] [5 groups unrecovered] the CLUB. WOOLWORTH told ZORA that in the IZBA, BANK, RADIO STATION, FARM[13] [4 groups unrecovered] many people who[14]**

**[17 groups unrecovered]**

**by the next post answer:**

**1. Why [1 group unrecovered] ZORA.**

**2. Were these reports read [1 group unrecovered] by the liaison man.**

**3. Did MAJ and SERGEJ see these reports.**

**4. Who told ZORA [3 groups unrecovered] and then told [1 group unrecovered].**

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

**to WOOLWORTH and SACKS.**

**6. Why did ZORA begin to take**

**[33 groups unrecovered]**

**steps taken to curtail ZORA's dangerous activities.**

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

**Without waiting for instructions from us after you reply to the questions which have been raised, immediately and in detail enlighten our liaison man about the serious mistakes he has committed in the work with ZORA. As an ultimatum warn ZORA that if she does not carry out our instructions and if she undertakes steps without our consent, we shall immediately terminate all relations with her. Forbid ZORA to recruit all her acquaintances one after the other. Take all steps to see that ZORA's activities do not lead to serious political consequences with the COUNTRY [U.S.]. This example clearly illustrates not only the falling off in the Residency's work of controlling and educating probationers [agents], but also the lack of understanding by our operational workers of the most elementary rules in our work.**

[redacted] No further NY —> Moscow ZORA messages were found, as the Venona source runs dry during 1945.[15]

13. NY —> Moscow, No. 992, 26 June 1945, to VIKTOR provides the last Venona update on Judith Coplon's work for the KGB:

**Your 4195 [not available]**

**After SIMA's transfer to CARTHAGE [Washington], she was instructed to refrain from [c% removing] documents until she was quite sure that she was trusted. As you were**

[13] FARM (KhUTOR) = Foreign Economic Administration

[14] It is not possible to make sense of this WOOLWORTH, DUNNING, SACKS episode from the recovered text. Whatever was going on, ZORA had violated operational security procedures.

[15] However, one later message concerns ZORA's step-father, Enos Regnet Wicher, covemame KIN: NY —> Moscow, No. 1137, 17 July 1945 from SERGEJ to VIKTOR with a copy to VADIM (Gromov, the Resident in Washington). NY reports that KIN has been asked to fill out an Army security questionnaire. The Army seemed to know his "covemame while he was a party organizer in the State of Wisconsin". The message also says that "At the regular meeting KIN related the following", confirming that he was a KGB agent. Wicher had some type of national defense position at Columbia University, thus the security forms.

**advised earlier, on the advice of her superiors S. is studying the Russian language with the aim of [1 group unrecovered] a post in the department of the CLUB which is investigating the actions of the USSR and the Communists. S. was given the task of studying the CLUB, its methods of work, the way in which documents are kept. On this matter S. [d % compiled]**

**[121 groups unrecoverable]**

14. NY —> Moscow, No. 1053, 5 July 1945, ANTON to VIKTOR is the last Venona message concerning Coplon, only the second paragraph concerns her:[16]

**URAL for liaison with SIMA is not being used but after his transfer to [4 groups unrecovered] [c% is necessary further working out].**

Judith Coplon remained in the sensitive position with the Justice Department until her arrest in 1949, meaning that she had been supplying information to the KGB for about four years.

[16] ANTON must have been temporary Resident as he is signing a message unrelated to work as head of the technical targets line. The rest of message concerns the KGB paying college expenses for agent HOOK, a message quoted earlier in the study.

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# XVI. DUNCAN LEE AND KGB PENETRATION OF U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

## A. Overview

This chapter presents a selection of Venona messages concerning KGB penetration of the U.S. intelligence agencies during the period 1942–45. Some reference is also made to the GRU, though most information relating to the work of that service, against all targets, is in a separate chapter. All U.S. Venona references to attempted or possible penetration of the FBI, Army and Naval Intelligence are given — a relatively small body of material. The OSS, however, was badly penetrated and most of the Venona messages in this chapter relate to that KGB target. All Venona messages concerning Major Duncan C. Lee, administrative assistant to General William Donovan, head of the OSS, are presented in full.

The reader will also want to consider the Weisband/Philby chapter (VII.), the section on some aspects of the Lauchlin Currie case (III.c.) and the previous chapter on Judith Coplon when considering KGB operations against U.S. intelligence and security services.

Several points need to be made to put the information in this chapter in perspective:

1. Both the U.S. and UK, with very good reason, attempted to establish intelligence relations with the KGB, especially, and the GRU to share information concerning their common enemy, coordinate operations and for mutual support. With the approval of President Roosevelt, General Donovan of the OSS went a long way down that road. In his conferences with General Fitin (who was none other than VIKTOR) he gave the KGB a considerable amount of information about the operations, personnel and techniques of the OSS. He did not, however, coordinate this with the British who had their own connections to the Soviet services which may have included such things as landing Russian agents in Western Europe by plane or submarine. But it is probably fair to say that the British were much more cautious than General Donovan and his subordinates, and General Deane (General Marshall's man in Moscow), in dealing with the KGB. The KGB gained extraordinary access to the OSS both officially and through espionage.

2. The OSS was put together in a hurry, its original pre-war charter from the President a muddled, contradictory mission statement. Later the organization was militarized and placed under the JCS, but it was an irregular sort of organization, with persons of doubtful security background employed as civilians, or enlisted or commissioned into the armed forces. Presumably these were people with special skills and knowledge such as language ability (e.g. Serbo–Croatian for work with Tito's guerrillas; veterans of the Lincoln Battalion in the Spanish Civil War who might have had experience in irregular warfare). The ambitious goals of the OSS required a lot of people with the backgrounds that might shorten the training period; that is, the OSS not only handled secret intelligence and counterintelligence operations, but also guerrilla warfare, propaganda and intelligence research and analysis activities on a worldwide scale (less General MacArthur's theater — he did not welcome the OSS).

3. Finally the overall security standards of the War Department (though less so the Navy) remained ambiguous and ever-shifting during the war — and not just for OSS. As early as 1942, General George V. Strong, the Army's Assistant Chief of Staff, G–2 had ruled that past Communist Party membership was not a bar to work in defense industries. Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy went back and forth on the matter of Communists in the Army, finally deciding that past Communist Party membership or activities did not bar a person from military service or even a commission, though in the latter case, especially, an intensive

investigation would be appropriate. Presumably people with that sort of background would not be eligible for more sensitive work, though even that is not clear.[1]

B. Penetration of Military and Naval Intelligence and the FBI: the Venona Record

The Venona record on this subject is rather modest, except for penetration of the Military Intelligence School at Fort Ritchie, Maryland about which there are some long, fairly well-recovered KGB messages. While a number of KGB or GRU agents in the OSS were in the Army or Navy, we leave that for the next sections.

"ALEKSANDROV's daughter should be aimed at the KhATA"

Three Venona messages mention the KGB's efforts to penetrate the FBI, and a fourth might relate, though this is unlikely. Coverterm KhATA = the FBI. These messages in date order:

• NY —> Moscow, Nos. 821, 823, 825, 31 May 1943, from LUKA to VIKTOR is a long, poorly recovered message. Paragraphs 2. and 3. concern covername BOG (GOD) who was never identified. In paragraph 2. only BOG was recovered, with 112 groups unrecovered. Paragraph 3. says:

**BOG is working in**

**[100 groups unrecovered]**

**in front of the chief of the KhATA**

**[71 groups unrecoverable]**

**he will be placed under**

**[24 groups unrecovered]**

**and [1 group unrecovered] organization of liaison.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1322, 15 September 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR concerns covername ALEKSANDROV, who remains unidentified but may have been of Russian origin, possibly a White Russian. While only the last paragraph mentions penetration of the FBI, the complete message is quoted for possible clues to what is going on. Some of the covernames in the message:

NAZAR = Stepan Nikolaevich Shundenko (KGB)
BEK = Nikolaj Sergeevich Kurnakov (KGB)
AKhMED = unidentified
ALEKSANDROV and his daughter = unidentified
White Line = possibly the KGB Line working the White Russian target.[2]
WHITE HARES = probably the White Russian emigres.
KhATA = the FBI

The message:

[1] In his memoirs, the Communist sympathizer John Houseman (star of The Paper Chase, and long-time collaborator with Orson Welles etc.) mentioned the sophisticated views of General Strong, who had offered Houseman an undercover intelligence position. Nonetheless, General Strong hated the OSS and frequently drew attention to that organization's supposed lack of security. Mr. McCloy, a prominent attorney (Strong was also a lawyer) held moderate views but was much committed to both due process and pragmatism. Both of them were very important supporters of Army Sigint.

[2] In other messages the White Line is suggested by the analysts to refer to journalists — that would not be the case in this message.

**At the last meeting with NAZAR, BEK, repeating what he had said before, said that the WHITE HARES know him as a red and are avoiding him, also Akhmed, ALEKSANDROV**

**[41 groups unrecovered]**

**asks BEK. Further he asks to be oriented on the situation with regard to the taking of our citizenship, by ALEKSANDROV, who already has the first papers, and to be given specific instructions about using ALEKSANDROV's daughter, who is preparing to go to TYRE [NYC], where allegedly she could get herself a place in any institution as she has the necessary data.**

[the following numbered paragraphs seem to be MAJ's observations on what BEK had reported, rlb]

**1. In what BEK says about the scantiness of his opportunities for processing[3] WHITE HARES there is more than a good deal of truth. To find out precisely what his and the group's possibilities are we propose to get NAZAR to have a personal talk with at any rate Akhmed and ALEKSANDROV.**

**2. It would not be a good thing to send BEK's wife alone to the Union, as BEK would very soon start to complain of being lonely and insist on leaving for there.**

**3. How has the business of ALEKSANDROV's taking our citizenship been decided? At the moment we link this question closely with the prospect of bringing his daughter into our work.**

**4. We take it that ALEKSANDROV's daughter should be aimed at the KhATA. Telegraph permission not later than 24th September.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1410, 6 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. In this message, MAJ reports about the failures of agent Bernie Schuster (here as covername ECHO) to carry out tasks assigned by the Residency, including getting agents into the FBI. Once again we see the intimate connection between Chairman Browder, the American Communist Party and the KGB. The second internal message dealing with this matter is quoted in full:

**Recently ECHO has failed to carry out most of our tasks, pleading the unwillingness of the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN [American Communists] to cooperate. ECHO has been described to you as a worker occupying a responsible position in the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN's organization. In an interview with IKS [Jack Katz] quite a different picture came to light. ECHO is raising with IKS the question of our selecting another worker who occupies a more responsible position to carry out our tasks, leaving E. the role of go-between. He says that, because of the modest nature of his position among the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN, he cannot**

**[29 groups unrecoverable]**

**the selection of a replacement for RIT [u/i], the search for a safe house, the selection of candidates for planting in the KhATA etc remain unfulfilled for the reasons indicated above. E. recommends us to arrange with RULEVOJ [Earl Browder] for a responsible worker to be assigned to us, one who is capable of carrying out the necessary measures**

[3] "processing" is here used for that flexible KGB term OFORMLENIE.

**without asking permission from the authorities each time. If we do not do this, he will continue to be unable, so he says, to cope with our tasks.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1522, 27 October 1944, to VIKTOR. In this message, three weeks after the preceding, New York again refers to Bernie Schuster, now as covername DIK (vice ECHO) and, for the only time that has been found in Venona, suggests that the KGB did have an agent inside the FBI. The NSA Venona collection contains no information about the possible identity of that agent. The message is quoted in full though it contains multiple subjects:

**Reference your 4900 [not available]. At the regular meeting BOB [Robert Owen Menaker] informed me:**

**1. [12 groups unrecovered] to wait a little.**

**2. COCA–COLA (henceforth RO) [c% promised to give] [5 groups unrecovered]. BAS's firm also. I explained to BOB that a trip in RO's line would suit us.**[4]

**3. His wife in her time has passed us unpublished material of correspondents of 'Time', may further [3 groups unrecovered] but bit by bit. Is this of interest?**

**4. If you have [8 groups unrecovered] temporarily does no have until**

**[29 groups unrecovered]**

**DIK [Bernie Schuster] please define more precisely.**

**According to [1 group unrecovered] IKS [1 group unrecovered] our source in the KhATA arrived here**[5]

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**[57 groups unrecoverable]**

All we know for certain from Venona is that Judith Coplon gained access to FBI information through her position in the Foreign Agents' Registration Section of the Justice Department.

U.S. Naval Intelligence

A fair number of recovered GRU–Naval messages concern the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) and the various leadership personalities. Information acquired from ONI, legally, as part of regular attache business, is found in Venona. There are no messages, GRU or KGB, that suggest penetration of U.S. Naval Intelligence, but there are two situations of interest.

• In the first, an overly talkative, but unidentified Marine Corps captain told GRU–Naval officer covername KENT some things about Navy Sigint. The message is GRU (naval), Washington —> Moscow, No. 713, 1 April 1943, from unrecovered covername Name No. 91 to unrecovered covername Name No. 42[6]. Three of five paragraphs quoted as follows:

**On 30 March 1943 a Marine Corps Captain told KENT:**

[4] Covername COCA–COLA (changed to RO) is unidentified. BAS = KGB agent Michael W. Burd. This paragraph cannot be understood.

[5] IKS = Jack Katz

[6] Name No. 91 (the Naval GRU Resident) and Name No. 42 (the Russian DNI) are US–UK terms to identify covernames that could not be recovered.

**1. The recently formed Fourth Division of the Marine Corps, which will be sent to the CONTINENT[7] in the near future, is undergoing training at NEW RIVER.**

**2. It is believed that the U.S. Navy Special Intelligence Service is situated not in the Navy Building, but in newly constructed premises in the area of MASSACHUSETTS, NEBRASKA and WISCONSIN Avenues (Northwest). It is guarded by picked Marines and inside by officers. On the outside, the post is surrounded by three lines of fences and the latest signaling system is in use.**

**3. The Naval Intelligence Service is selecting from officers and enlisted men cadres of people who know Russian for possible use in the Far East in case we go to war with JAPAN.**

The first paragraph is correct. The second paragraph accurately gives the new location of OP–20–G, the Navy's Sigint organization, and correctly indicates it was heavily guarded and secured. The third paragraph may not have been correct insofar as OP–20–G was concerned, but is possibly an accurate preliminary report about ONI. OP–20–G did not begin Sigint operations against Russian targets until summer 1943 and the language section, set up at that time, consisted of one officer who already knew the Russian language.

• The second naval intelligence item will only receive brief mention here. Both the KGB and the GRU (naval) had an interest in Marine Master Sergeant Aleksej A. Stupenkov, Russian born, who had fought for the Whites in the Russian Civil War, came to the U.S. and joined the Marine Corps at the start of World War II. The KGB described him as a fascist, but was interested in him because of his access to defector Viktor Kravchenko. The GRU (naval) also tried to contact him. It appears that Stupenkov was a guard NCO, at least some of the time, at OP–20–G and other Navy installations in Washington. More on Stupenkov in a later chapter on Special Operations — but he certainly was not a Russian agent.

## U.S. Military Intelligence

During the Second World War, Military Intelligence was divided into agencies at the War Department level and theater and tactical units. Very roughly, MI looked like this:

Assistant Chief of Staff, G–2 : principal intelligence advisor to the Army Chief of Staff and the Secretary of War. His principal operating arm, under his direct control, was the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). The MIS performed high level analysis for the War Department and ran many specialized programs such as tracking German Atomic bomb scientists and facilities; secret communications with American POWs in Europe. Through the MIS Special Branch (headed by Carter Clarke), the AC of S, G–2 controlled high level Army Sigint.

Signal Security Agency (SSA) "Arlington Hall": under the Chief Signal Officer of the Army, SSA conducted high level Army Sigint operations and produced codes and ciphers. Ultimately the G–2 controlled SSA, but not absolutely until late in the war.

Counterintelligence Corps (CIC): for training and doctrine and for CONUS activities this organization came under the AC of S, G–2, and for a time the Army Provost Marshal. MIS, however, had a counterintelligence group that oversaw certain major CIC activities in the field and in CONUS. CIC units overseas were generally under command of operational commanders (e.g. each Army Division had a CIC team or detachment).

[7] CONTINENT = u/i coverterm for a Pacific theater of operations or location.

Venona shows no penetration of SSA/Arlington Hall, unless covername ZVENO is in fact Bill Weisband, though we know of course from other sources that Weisband was a KGB agent (see Chapter VII). Likewise, we have no information from Venona about penetration of the MIS at the War Department level (not even a hint of such regarding Special Branch), or of the CIC. The Venona material mostly concerns the MI school at Fort Ritchie. At least two Army enlisted men who trained there were KGB agents.

The Military Intelligence Training Center, Camp Ritchie, Maryland was activated on 19 June 1942, for the purpose of training Army officers and enlisted personnel for overseas intelligence assignments. By mid–1944, 6693 students had graduated from the school, including some Marine Corps and OSS personnel. The school taught such subjects as OB, Sigint overview, CI, photo interpretation, POW interrogation, terrain intelligence. Of particular interest to the KGB, the school had a special course of study known as the Russian Interpreters Section with classes in Russian OB, Russian geopolitics, and interrogation of Russian personnel (as well as the standard subjects). The U.S. Army had considerable contact with Russian military personnel in Alaska and elsewhere (e.g. Montana) along the aircraft and equipment ferry routes to Siberia.

Three messages are of particular interest.

• NY —> Moscow, Nos. 777–781, 26 May 1943, from LUKA to VIKTOR. This very long, spottily recovered message went through at least 10 reissues and amendments by NSA/GCHQ from the early 1950s to 1970. Following are some extracts that show the detailed reporting by KGB agent SLAVA, who was Ilya Elliott Wolston, a student in Section 7D (Russian Interpreters Section) from 31 Dec 1942–30 Sep 1943. The bullets are mine, the text is quoted from the message:

> **• SLAVA reports that the 'Military Intelligence Training Center' school is situated at Ritchie, Maryland. [5 groups unrecovered] Russian section.**
>
> **• Interrogation work with prisoners of war, has Italian and German sections, but it [36 groups unrecovered] Far Eastern, Arabian, Turkey, USSR**
>
> **• and one each: Italian, French, English, Arabian, Spanish, [3 groups unrecovered] Russian, Turkish, a section of officers, counterintelligence, photographic and [2 groups unrecovered] section of China and Japan. (The basic school of the 'Far East' is at SAVAGE)**[8]
>
> **[SLAVA then names and describes three people who had graduated from an earlier "Russian section" course and gives spotting and assessment information about people in other classes or on the faculty; some examples follow, rlb]**
>
> **• Lieutenant H. [name withheld], 30–32 years old, a Polish Jew. Pro-Soviet feelings.**
>
> **• S. [name withheld], 21 years old ... emigrated from China.**
>
> **• G. [name withheld], 21 years old. Emigrated from China where his parents remained. Leans to the right.**
>
> **• [15 groups unrecoverable] a Jew from Warsaw. [6 groups unrecovered]. He lived in Paris where he was a correspondent ..... Pro-Soviet feelings.**
>
> [In the last part of the message SLAVA's talent spotting seems to be in a different category because the paragraph numbering does not follow what had gone before. An example follows.]

[8] SAVAGE = Camp Savage, Minnesota

- **C. [name withheld] ... school. 31–33 years old, ... he lives in TYRE [NYC] at the address 3871 Sedgewick Avenue Bronx [10 groups unrecoverable] 982.[9] He is a teacher at the school. He is drawn in exclusively during examinations. Pro-Soviet feelings**

One of SLAVA's classmates soon after appeared in the traffic as covername HOOK [KhUK] (see below). HOOK certainly appeared somewhere in the hundreds of unrecovered/unrecoverable groups of the SLAVA message and could have been recruited based on SLAVA's assessment. SLAVA/Wolston himself had been recruited by his uncle, Jack Soble (covername ABRAM) after Soble had told his KGB handler that his nephew was in the Army and might have some interesting information. A short while later, Wolston was visiting Soble's residence while on furlough. He was drinking heavily. Soble told him that he was working secretly for the Russians and asked Wolston to provide information to give to the them. Wolston thereupon typed out a long report about Camp Ritchie and signed it! Then or later, Wolston recommended to Soble the KGB recruitment of HOOK and several others whose names are in the Venona message (among the names I have withheld).[10]

- NY —> Moscow, No. 893, 10 June 1943, from LUKA to VIKTOR apparently replies to the Center's questions about the earlier SLAVA message; partially recovered but quoted in full:

**Your No. 2411 [not available]**

**We [1 group unidentified] SLAVA's data: the RITCHIE school has four departments, which encompass 14 sections. The first department consists of 3 German and 1 Italian sections; the second department – French, Spanish [c%Scandinavian], Arabian, Turkish, Russian and English sections; the remaining 3 sections – counterintelligence, photographic and officer**

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

**Russian sections which is included in the second department.**

**[43 groups unrecoverable]**

**he listed the American [2 groups unrecovered] class, with which he took the course. 3 who graduated earlier (C., B. and L.) [names withheld, rlb] are instructors of the school, whom as a student SLAVA**

**[38 groups unrecoverable]**

**instructors of the school**

**[9 groups unrecovered]**

**leadership of the school side by side with [2 groups unrecovered] to charge him as an intelligent student with separate missions**

**[5 groups unrecovered]**

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1548, 3 November 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR. This third message about the Intelligence School contains some miscellaneous second-hand information, but is quite interesting because of

[9] 982 = part of the telephone number of C.'s brother-in-law, at the Bronx address

[10] Venona Collection, item 57–047c. Jack Soble was convicted on espionage charges during 1957 and subsequently cooperated by providing additional CI information, including the SLAVA/HOOK material. Venona material, though concealed in the prosecution, had led to Soble's arrest. HOOK's mother, covername MAShA was also a KGB agent, though the New York Residency thought her main value was as a point of contact for HOOK. She reported on the Roumanian exile community in NYC (Second Line business).

the source, Elsa Reiss, aka: Elsa Bernaut. Her husband, Ignace Reiss, an experienced GRU officer who had been reassigned to the KGB, was murdered in Switzerland by the KGB in 1937 (they also tried to poison her and their children). Mrs. Reiss was still keeping in touch with the Party in the U.S.:

> **In a conversation with KANT [Mark Zborowski], Elsa REISS advised of the existence of RITCHIE which is known to you**
>
> **[25 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **on ABRAMOVICH's recommendation.[11] An officer of the ARSENAL [War Department] told Elsa in confidence that the school is supposed to be training cadres for a new war. Elsa criticized THE OLD MAN [the late Trotsky] for setting up a Fourth International considering this a futile business, expressed regret**
>
> **[56 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

A message concerning covername HOOK[12] gives some information about how this graduate of the intelligence school at Camp Ritchie was being used by the U.S. Army and the KGB. The main recovered text of NY —> Moscow, No. 627, 5 May 1944, from MAJ follows:

> **[HOOK] while in FAIRBANKS in the rank of sergeant in the American Army is meeting Soviet airmen. Through a certain acquaintance HOOK sent MAShA [his mother's KGB covername] a photograph in which he had been taken amongst Soviet airmen. The name of one airman was NAZAROV. HOOK has in his possession the book, which he took with him from the school [i.e. Camp Ritchie, rlb] and did not manage to pass on to MAShA, when in accordance with your request we wanted to get it a second time to finish photographing the pages that had been missed. These materials were sent home. By post No. 2 we have sent you two photographs of HOOK and advised you of the arrangements for getting in touch with him. At the time of HOOK's departure from TYRE [NYC] MAShA came to an arrangement with him that our people in making contact were to mention in conversation the name of MIKULA with whom he was acquainted in TYRE and then they would enjoy his complete confidence.[13]**

A 10 June 1943 message, No. 894, LUKA to VIKTOR probably concerns materials that HOOK had taken from Camp Ritchie and given to the KGB. Unfortunately only a few phrases of the message were recovered, among these (recovered text, my bullets):[14]

- **HOOK received American citizenship along with other foreign students**
- **MAShA was**
- **under recruitment**

---

[11] Rafael Abramovich had been President of the Russian Social Democrats, an anti-Communist party.

[12] HOOK was a candidate for KGB post-war college financial aid.

[13] The Venona collection does not contain any significant information about HOOK's duties in Alaska. Presumably he was there on an MIS assignment, targeting Soviet military personnel in Fairbanks — in which case he would have been an excellent internal security asset of the KGB. HOOK and MAShA later denied working for the Russians, and, as in other cases it was not possible to confront them with the Venona evidence.

[14] About 250 groups could not be recovered. The message also contains some reporting by HOOK's mother, MAShA as the last sentence of the message says, "I am taking measures to re-verify the information .... agreement of MANIU and ANTONESCU", the latter was the Premier of Roumania. MAShA targeted Roumanian exile groups in NYC. HOOK and MAShA came out of Russian occupied Roumania in about 1940, first going to Iran and then on to the U.S. HOOK = Dmetrius Dvoichenko–Markov and MAShA = his mother, Eufrosina.

- **turned over to us a series of secret materials [2 groups unrecovered] (...3, 4, 5 ) and gives the impression**

C. KGB Penetration of the OSS (KGB Coverterm IZBA = OSS)

Venona provides a remarkable record of KGB (and GRU) penetration of the OSS and access to OSS information and personalities. A rough breakdown of what has been learned from Venona:

(1.) Identified KGB Agents Inside the OSS

| KGB Covername | Truename |
|---|---|
| ATTILA | Major Linn Farish |
| DROP | Philip E. Moseley |
| CAUTIOUS | Julius Joseph |
| IVY | Emma Joseph |
| KOCH | Lt. Col. Duncan Lee |
| ZAYATS (HARE) | Maurice Halperin |
| IZRA | Donald Wheeler |
| IVANOV | John Scott (Nearing) |
| SLENG (SLANG) | Jane Foster Zlatovsky |

2.) Unidentified KGB Covernames: probably agents inside OSS

ERSH
GAVR (HAVRE)
GUARD
I.
LIZA
MIRAGE
MUSE
UCN/6
possibly UCN/19
...GEL (UCN/22)

(3.) OSS Affiliates Found by Truename Only

About 38 truenames found in Venona have a direct connection to OSS. Most of these appeared in a single message that will be described in the section about Duncan Lee. The context in which the names are found suggests that several of these people were KGB sources or actively under consideration for recruitment. Another group of truenames in Venona, not counted in the 38, are in a list of socially prominent persons in OSS.

(4.) KGB Agents Closely Connected to OSS

| KGB Covername | True Name |
|---|---|
| CRUCIAN (KARAS) | Anton Ivancic |
| KOLO | Sava Kosanovich |
| SERES | Ivan Subasich |

Plus some 5–10 unidentified covernames that fit into this category

So, depending how and what we are counting, it might be reasonable to say that Venona shows a minimum of 30 KGB agents in or close to the OSS (and this does not count those targeting OSS or handling OSS assets: i.e. the above does not include Silvermaster, Bentley, Schuster et al). An important qualifier to any head count of spies is the limited Venona coverage. Very little KGB London or China traffic is available, nor do we know how the KGB might have serviced its agents in the OSS in areas such as North Africa, Italy, Yugoslavia, Iberia. Thus, if an OSS person in the service of the KGB or GRU left the U.S. in 1942 or early 1943, prior to the most exploitable Venona period, and stayed overseas through the "readable years" (which end in mid–1945), we might find no mention of him or her in the traffic.[15]

A few words on OSS organization. The agency had been founded in 1941 as the COI and became the OSS in 1942. At the beginning and throughout the life of the OSS much emphasis was placed on Research and Analysis, which became the name of the most successful unit of the organization. The other major units were Secret Intelligence (SI) which was a HUMINT outfit; Counterintelligence (X–2); and Special Operations (SO) which handled guerrilla warfare matters and was especially active in France, Italy, Yugoslavia and in the CBI theater. KGB/GRU penetration of these elements of OSS was by no means even — most of it was probably in R&A and Special Operations and some narrow areas of SI.[16] However, the KGB had a man in the front office who had very wide access.

Some Early Mentions of IZBA – 1942

The COI, the pre-war name for the organization founded by William J. Donovan, became the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in June 1942. Following are three early mentions of these organizations, always called covername IZBA by the KGB.

• Moscow —> NY, No. 325, 17 May 1942, from VIKTOR is poorly recovered but gives some idea of what the Center was looking for. We do not know when the targeting of COI began, as very few 1942 messages are readable and only one 1941 message has been read (COI was established in 1941):

**[20 groups unrecovered]**

[15] We have some hints of this in the traffic. For example covername ZVENO, who may be Bill Weisband of Arlington Hall or an OSS officer, disappears from Venona view once he gets to London in mid–1943. There are others of this type, such as covername ATTILA who might be mentioned once or twice by New York KGB in an off-handed or second hand way because the agent was overseas. In other words KGB NY reports what tidbits it had with the real reporting on/from that agent being done by, for example, London KGB, of which we have nothing from Venona except that one famous week in September 1945. If Weisband is not ZVENO then he entirely escaped Venona because of the location and timing of his KGB assignments. His could not have been a unique experience.

[16] It also needs to be said that the OSS used a number of security controls to limit access to sensitive information. Some employees, with doubtful backgrounds, were specifically barred from access to classified information or limited to certain levels of classified information. Others got security approval only for specific operations abroad e.g. approval to work in propaganda operations in North Africa only.

**of the IZBA in the Library of Congress. ZVUK [Jacob Golos] became acquainted with KEENEY**[17]

**[60 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

**We are interested in the Russian Section of the IZBA**

**[40 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 726–729, 22 May 1942, MAKSIM to VIKTOR gives the reply to the Center's request. The first third of this very long message is well recovered, the remainder not (about 900 groups are unrecovered or unrecoverable). The prologue is quoted as follows:

**In reply to your no. 2134.**[18]

**In the opinion of the East European Section of the IZBA, the U.S. Military Intelligence here is incapable of [c% the admitted] mandate.**

**[10 groups unrecovered]**

**military intelligence [3 groups unrecovered] not [1 group unrecovered] and [d% is/are based on] premature evaluation by the agents entrusted with**

**{11 groups unrecovered]**

**section of the IZBA treats with contempt Military Intelligence, although it is subordinate to it.**

**In the section work two well-known experts: the Consultant John MOSELEY of Cornell University and the chief of the Russian Section Joshua STARR. Employed by the section are:**[19]

**[nine names are then given, in numbered subparagraphs, of which two are quoted as follows, rlb:]**

**2. B. [name withheld, rlb] – junior researcher, who worked some time for [8 groups unrecovered] manager of 'Progressive Bookshop' in Washington (check him and let us know the results).**

**************

**5. John SCOTT – consultant on Soviet industry. This year he sent a mass of materials on the Soviet war industry. The materials have not yet been worked over (our source IVANOV).**[20]

*******************

**We will report on the other employees when we receive [1 group unrecovered]**

**Strategic surveys finished by the section include surveys on the Northern Caucasus, Transcaucasia, and Finland.**

---

[17] Presumably Philip Olin Keeney. He and his wife Mary Jane were veteran Communist Party members and probable Soviet agents. In one Venona message the KGB refers to Keeney as a GRU agent.

[18] The Center's internal number for the message with external number 325, quoted above.

[19] John Moseley is a mistake for Philip E. Mosely, later known as covername DROP, a KGB agent.

[20] In other words John Scott, also known as John Scott Nearing was already affiliated with the KGB as covername IVANOV.

The remainder of the message is only recovered in scraps such as: "study in schools. The need of translators" and "The relationship of the government to..... The Military Intelligence of the USA".

• NY —> Moscow, No. 865, 18 June 1942 from MAKSIM to VIKTOR contains a poorly recovered report from unidentified covername [1 group unrecovered] GEL (in other words "—GEL") about the IZBA. The message refers to documentary materials including "a report on meteorological units in Soviet ports, aircraft instruments".

## Duncan C. Lee: Spy in the Front Office

Duncan C. Lee, covername KOCH, has been found in 13 Venona messages, 9 of which were sufficiently recovered to be published. Elizabeth Bentley, his sometime KGB handler, gave the FBI extensive information on him, including unflattering comments about his personality and courage, that might have suggested he would have been a pushover upon confrontation by the FBI. That seems to have been delayed and an opportunity missed. When finally questioned by the FBI, and later by a Congressional committee, Lee denied any involvement in espionage on behalf of the Russians. The Venona record of his treachery is quite clear.

Lee was born in China to missionary parents. He graduated from Yale in 1935 and was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University from 1935–1938. After further study at Yale he joined the New York law firm headed by William J. Donovan, later head of the OSS. In July 1942, Lee joined the OSS as special assistant to Donovan and by the end of the war he had reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, Army Reserve. Into the early 1950s he was employed by the Washington law firm, Corcoran and Youngman. He was extremely well connected, and Donovan, Corcoran et al believed him innocent of the charges made by Elizabeth Bentley.

In 1945, Bentley told the FBI that in 1942, KGB agent Mary Price, sometime secretary to Walter Lippmann, told agent-officer Jacob Golos that Lee, a member of the Communist Party, would be working for Donovan in the OSS. Golos told Price to handle him, but he soon turned the case over to Bentley, who met with Lee intermittently until the end of 1944, receiving high quality information from him. Bentley told the Bureau that Lee was very afraid of being caught and was particularly terrified that the KGB, when they entered into the so-called exchange agreement with the OSS, might visit him to express their thanks for his secret work for them.[21]

Following are the published Venona messages concerning Duncan Lee, covername: KOCH.[22]

1. NY —> Moscow, No. 782, 26 May 1943, MAKSIM to VIKTOR. Notice Lee's reluctance to go as far as most of the KGB's agents (such as the Silvermaster group) in removing classified documents:

> **KOCH reports that at the CAPTAIN—BOAR [FDR – Churchill] conference [1 group garbled]**
>
> **[16 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **known, IZBA has no**
>
> **[40 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **information from ISTANBUL [8 groups unrecovered]**

[21] Bentley told the FBI that Lee provided quality rather than quantity. Judging by Venona this would be so — by comparison Maurice Halperin of the OSS appears in Venona about three times as often as Lee.



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

**[d% known to the Roumanian ambassador but in the situation after]**

**[53 groups unrecovered]**

**thousand dollars in support of an underground diversion and espionage group in France.**

**In the middle of June KOCH is going [2 groups unrecovered] month to CHUNKING to acquaint himself there with the work of the IZBA group. With him will go an American army colonel [1 group unidentified] at CHUNGKING [3 groups unrecovered] espionage group. If it is considered necessary to establish [6 groups unrecovered] with him there, we will arrange a password.**

**We discussed with KOCH the question of his removing documents for photographing. KOCH said that in some cases he agrees to do this, but as a rule he considers it inexpedient. He promised to think [6 groups unrecovered]**

2. NY —> Moscow, No. 880, 8 June 1943, MAKSIM to VIKTOR lists by covername the New York Residency's agents in the OSS:

**[20 groups unrecovered]**

**about the IZBA and RatsIYa**[23]

**[24 groups unrecovered]**

**probationers [agents] ZAYaTs, KOCH, OSTOROShNYj (he works in the Far Eastern Section of the IZBA on the question of the maritime resources of Japan), KOLLEGA (he works in the Photographic Section, PICTORIAL DIVISION, ERSh and [UCN/19]**[24]

**[58 groups unrecovered]**

**with [whom/which] we are now occupying ourselves. On receipt of full information about the people [1 group unrecovered].**[25]

3. NY —> Moscow, No. 887, No. 887, LUKA to VIKTOR. Covernamе ZAYaTs, Maurice Halperin, also appears in this message:

**1. ZAYaTs reports that according to information of a branch of the IZBA**

**[73 groups unrecovered]**

**in ITALY. Also, Italian workers are returning from Germany.**

**2. KOCH reports that the IZBA has received from its branch in SIDON [London] two confidential reports on [3 groups unrecovered]. One of them from 30 April says that EDEN is inclined to side with the Poles but KABAN [BOAR : Churchill] takes a more moderate position proposing to cede BYELORUSSIA and the UKRAINE to the USSR and Eastern PRUSSIA to POLAND**

---

[23] RATsYIa (RADIO STATION) = the Office of War Information

[24] KOCH = Duncan Lee
ZAYaTs = Maurice Halperin
OSTOROZhNYJ (CAUTIOUS) = Julius J. Joseph
KOLLEGA = Unidentified
PICTORIAL DIVISION = probably the Pictures Division, News and Features Bureau of OWI
ERSh = Unidentified

[25] The NSA analyst notes that the unrecovered group probably represents "We will report further or "We will report by postal dispatch".

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

**Poles and the chances for**

**[18 groups unrecovered]**

**IZBA from**

**[30 groups unrecovered]**

**PLIT–GALATS [the Swiss diplomat Pilet–Golaz]**

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

**diplomatic relations of [or with] the USSR**

4. NY —> Moscow, No. 830, 9 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. This message concerns a much publicized event of the Spring of 1944, when a parish priest from Springfield, Massachusetts, Father Stanislaus Orlemanski visited Stalin to conduct some private diplomacy on Polish and Catholic Church matters. On 15 and 16 May 1944, Dewitt Poole of the OSS talked to Orlemanski after which he prepared a long memorandum about the discussion (which in British style he stamped "Most Secret"). The KGB heard about the Orlemanski–Poole meeting from Duncan Lee:

> **KOCH reports that Dewitt POOLE, Head of the Nationalities Branch of the IZBA, compiled a report on the activities of the Roman Catholic priest ORLEMANSKIJ. In February of this year O. met him and communicated his desire to go to MOSCOW with a view to ascertaining the position of the USSR in the religious question and trying to clarify the relations between the two countries. On returning to the COUNTRY [U.S.] he handed over all the documents he had brought to the representative of the VATICAN who thanked him and sent the documents to the Pope. Recently O. again had a talk with POOLE, relating that he had discussed with our Government the question of the future of Poland and told Comrade STALIN that it is impossible to have dealings with any of the members of the existing Polish Government in SIDON [London]. Comrade STALIN is alleged to have objected, stating that only two members are totally unacceptable and that the future Polish Government must consist of members of the present government, the new Polish group in SMYRNA [Moscow] and representatives of the American Poles according to the choice of KAPITAN [FDR] and O. In the talk with POOLE, O. stated that he considers the participation of the Poles in the COUNTRY [U.S.] inexpedient. With regard to the frontiers of Poland O. expressed himself vaguely but said, however, that allegedly according to a statement of Comrade STALIN the decision about the CURZON line was 'thrust' upon him by the TEHERAN conference.**
>
> **POOLE considers O. a simple and honorable man who made the journey entirely on his own personal initiative. POOLE asked Bishop ShI about the reasons for the imposition upon O. of a disciplinary penalty. ShI allegedly answered that although O. was [c% simply] given punishment for drawing the Catholic Church together with the USSR [6 groups unrecovered] to dissuade other priests who want to act independently of the Catholic leadership.**
>
> **A few days ago DEDUShKA [Consul–General, NYC]in the presence of ShAKh [a KGB officer at the NY Residency] met O., who recounted his talks in [Moscow] almost the same**

**as to POOLE. This confirms our previous conclusion about the garrulity and unreliability of O.**[26]

"A list of Reds has been compiled"

5. NY —> Moscow, No. 1325, 1326, 15 September 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR mostly consists of a long report from KGB agent covername PILOT (Captain Lud Ullman) about the Air Staff's plans for transfers of USAAF combat units from Europe to the Pacific and CBI theaters and CONUS.[27] However, the first two paragraphs contain important information from Duncan Lee about the OSS Security Division's study of Communists in the OSS:

**According to KOCH's advice, a list of 'reds' has been compiled by the Security Division of IZBA. The list contains 4 surnames of persons who are supplying information to the Russians. One of them sounds like J. [name withheld, rlb]**

**The list is divided into two categories: 1. Open FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN [members of the C.P.] and 2. Sympathizers, left-wing liberals etc. (among them ZAYaTs.) KOCH is trying to get the list.**

Duncan Lee's information may have been misunderstood or garbled, the "4 surnames" probably should have been "24" (Lee obtained a list with 26 names as described below). The Residency had alerted the Center that the productive agent ZAYaTs, Maurice Halperin, was on the list.

6. Moscow sent a short message to New York a few days later, No. 954, 20 September 1944 telling NY that Bentley was to drop contact with Donald Wheeler [IZRA] and Halperin:

**Reference no. 741.**[28]

**Try through KOCH to get the list of 'reds'. Order MIRNA [Elizabeth Bentley] temporarily to cease liaison with IZRA and ZAYaTs. In future liaison may be reestablished only with our permission. Give KOCH the task of compiling a report on the Security Division of the IZBA.**

7. New York KGB wired back two days later with the list; NY —> Moscow, No. 1354, 22 September 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR.

**Further to number 741. On the Security Division of IZBA's list of FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN are [c% the following]:**

[a list of 26 truenames is then given: first name middle initial, last name; names withheld, rlb]

**Both the J.s and Z. [names withheld] are included in a list of persons 'concerning whom it is known that they give information**

[26] The analyst's footnote to this translation suggests that "Bishop ShI" is possibly an error for ShIN, that is, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. Or, the reference is to Reverend George A. Shea, Chancellor of the Diocese of Springfield who was involved in the suspension of Fr. Orlemanski and who talked with Poole. Orlemanski's plans for going to Russia were picked up on the regular taps on the Consulate's phones in NYC. On 12 April 1944 he told the Consulate that he had gotten priority air transport from Chicago —> Great Falls, Montana —> Alaska. The next day a consular officer (KGB or under KGB control) called him back and urged him to go to Great Falls as soon as possible. The officer gave him the name of a Russian colonel in Great Falls (an aircraft ferrying base on the route to Siberia). A future KGB agent, who had a radio program in NYC, also called the Consulate a couple times to say that he was boosting the Orlemanski mission on his radio program.

[27] This report, which is in great detail though only partially recovered, gave the Russians a good picture of the projected U.S. combat status in Europe after the defeat of Germany, e.g., "8. 17 groups of P–51s: 4 to the COUNTRY [CONUS], 2 to China India Burma, 11 to the central sector of the Pacific."

[28] No. 741 is the internal number of New York's no. 1325, just quoted.

**[10 groups unrecoverable]**

**such persons and a [c% proposal]**

**[6 groups unrecovered]**

**dismissal.**

One curiosity about the list: unlike New York's first message on the subject, it does not contain Maurice Halperin's name, but Donald Wheeler's name is there. Duncan Lee's own name is not on the list. New York drew special attention to the J.s and Z. (names withheld). The former were brothers who had fought with the Lincoln Battalion in Spain, one of them as a "dynamiter". Z. was, according to OSS records, a member of the Communist Party. We do not know if the J. brothers or Z. were in fact KGB agents.

Duncan Lee had definitely provided the KGB an authentic list compiled by OSS Security. However, the OSS list that the FBI got from CIA in 1951 must have been a later edition, as it contains the names of 47 suspected Communists in OSS (it is undated — it might of course have been an earlier list, later refined). The important point though is that all of Duncan Lee's 26 names, plus Halperin (Lee provided one name, Halperin, in the first "Reds" message and 26 for the second NY message, or a total of 27 names) are in the that other list of 47.

The Duncan Lee list is not in alphabetical order, nor could it be in order of the two supposed categories "open FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN" or "sympathizers". The list obtained by the FBI is in alphabetical order: the name, a short write-up relating to Communist connections and then a "Group" categorization —

Group I : Suspected of being a Communist

Group II : Entertains Communist beliefs

Group III : Extreme Liberal

The next part of this OSS paper gave the organizational placement of the suspects and codes their level of security approval/clearance. Here is the writeup, from the alphabetical section on Donald Wheeler, the KGB's IZRA:

> *45. Wheeler, Donald N. Civ. 17393. R&A Washington. Member of American League for Peace and Democracy; member Washington Bookshop; president of United Federal Workers, Treasury No. 11. Informants stated he is interested in Marxian Doctrine, and way over to the 'left wing'. At Yale the students reported him as taking up their time with talks about Communism. United Federal Workers of America wrote letter to Civil Service Commission protesting the treatment accorded subject.*
>
> *Source: CSC, FBI*
>
> *Evaluation: Group II. Entertains Communist beliefs.*
>
> *Security Status: Security Approval Recommended.*[29]

The J. brothers, Z. and Maurice Halperin were placed in Group I. The OSS security study must have given the KGB some pause (and names of some potential recruits they didn't know), but it did our side no good as far as the known spies, Halperin and Wheeler, were concerned. They stayed on at OSS, as did most or all of

[29] It is not clear if the OSS Security Division meant that Wheeler had been carried in the "security approval recommended" category before they had undertaken their special study of Communists in the OSS, or, less likely one would hope, the Security Division had now given approval in spite of their study.

the people on the list(s). More information on this matter is given in a restricted appendix, as some prominent names are involved.

The remaining two published messages regarding Lee follow.

8. NY —> Moscow, No. 1353, 23 September 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR is a multiple-subject message. One paragraph concerns Lee:

> **KOCH advises that RADIO ANNOUNCER [DIKTOR: General Donovan] will soon return and decide the question of his trip. The IZBA intends to send him [i.e. Lee, rlb] to INDIA or CHINA for 5–6 months. From what MIRNA [Bentley] says KOCH agrees that we should get in touch with him there. [c% we are giving] MIRNA the task of getting exact data on when and where exactly KOCH is going and with what mission.**

9. NY —> Moscow, No. 1437, 10 October 1944, to the 8th Department contains two separate OSS topics: a report from Halperin and one from Duncan Lee. The latter is quoted as follows:

> **DIKTOR [General Donovan] has appointed KOCH chief of the Japanese Section of the secret department of the COMPETITION.**[30]
>
> **KOCH advises that his section has a man in CHINA working with a small group of Japanese FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN [C.P. members] in FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN territory on the problem of dispatching people to JAPAN.**[31] **The plan is based on the use of Korean FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN and on the fact that JAPAN is importing Korean manpower. Details are being ascertained.**
>
> **According to a report of KOCH, the IZBA is extremely concerned about the fate of its people in territories being occupied by the Red Army, particularly in GERMANY where the concentration of IZBA people is higher than in other countries. The IZBA fears that its people will be [c% shot] and [5 groups unrecovered] in [2 groups unrecovered] demand to settle the question with the Russians.**

That was the last mention of Lee that has been found in Venona. According to Elizabeth Bentley's statement to the FBI in November 1945, she last saw Lee in December 1944, probably when she gave him his Christmas present from the KGB.[32] According to Bentley, "I subsequently learned from 'JACK' [Katz] who was one of my Russian contacts, that DUNCAN LEE had indicated to the person who took him over after I ceased my activities that he did not desire to continue his contacts with the Russian espionage setup any further. I also

[30] COMPETITION = the KGB coverterm for any non-Soviet intelligence or security service. Here the reference is to the OSS, usually called the IZBA. The "secret department" means the S.I. part of OSS. On a few occasions the KGB also uses the general coverterm "The GREENS" when referring to a non-Soviet security service.

[31] In other words, the OSS has an agent in the Communist-controlled part of China.

[32] Jacob Golos may have started the custom of giving Christmas presents to KGB agents: Miss Bentley made the purchases and the deliveries. Jack Katz, who partially succeeded Golos, continued the practice.

learned at this time that DUNCAN LEE at that time went to China, and I am unable to state whether he continued his contacts with the Russians after this time."[33]

Outline of the rest of the OSS chapter

The rest of this long chapter will concern KGB penetration of the British Secret Service station in NYC; KGB operations concerning the OSS in Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav contacts of the OSS; and finally an all-other survey of KGB messages about the OSS and/or reporting by KGB agents in the OSS.

The British Secret Service in New York City

In 1940, William Stephenson became chief of the British Secret Service (MI–6) station in New York City. The operation soon became a very large one, taking into its jurisdiction the entire Western Hemisphere. This organization operated under the cover of British Security Coordination (BSC) with the ostensible purpose of ensuring the physical safety of cargoes bound for the UK. Of course this was one of the actual missions of BSC whose more secret work included traditional intelligence and CI operations, covert operations and, later, the communications link for the passage of Sigint, GCHQ <—> U.S. Sigint services.[34]

KGB Venona messages, NY —> Moscow show one KGB agent within BSC, Cedric Belfrage, who had an unrecovered covername carried by NSA/GCHQ as UCN/9. One other member of the organization, Alexander Halpern, appears in the KGB messages, sometimes under suspicious circumstances. However, he is seen only (and often) by his truename, which seems to rule out espionage.[35] Another Secret Service officer at BSC, reported to have been a pre-war German and possibly Russian agent too, Colonel "Dick" Ellis, has not been found or identified in Venona.

Elizabeth Bentley, in her statement to the FBI, identified Belfrage as a KGB agent under Jacob Golos' control. She thought that Earl Browder introduced Belfrage to Golos. She never met Belfrage, though after Golos died, in late November 1943, the KGB asked her to resume contact with Belfrage — such requests persisted into 1945, though she had learned, from Browder, that Belfrage was "out of the racket now; let him stay out of it." Following are five UCN/9 – Belfrage messages:[36]

- NY —> Moscow, No. 725, 19 May 1943, MAKSIM to VIKTOR, contains political reporting, but the message is mostly unrecovered. The KGB coverterm, the BAR = the British Secret Service (MI–6).

**UCN/9 reports:**

[33] A few more words about Duncan Lee from Miss Bentley's statement: "LEE impressed me as a rather weak individual who was impressed with being a descendant of General LEE, and most of the times I saw him he was nervous and emotionally upset. He was extremely apprehensive about the possibility of being under FBI surveillance as he explained to me he was in a really vulnerable position as the FBI and OSS at that time, according to him, were both seeking to have control of all United States intelligence activities and that in furtherance of their claim, the FBI would very much like to place OSS personnel in an embarrassing position." She also noted that Lee said he did not like the espionage work for the Russians, "and he appeared to me to be troubled with a severe conflict of ideas."

[34] Undoubtedly the two most important activities of the BSC were to try to help the U.S. organize and coordinate its new or expanding intelligence services, and to influence the U.S. position regarding the UK and the war in Europe. The former is well documented (see Tom Troy's book on the subject); the latter, which may be almost the last secret of the WWII era, much less so.

[35] That is, many spies are seen at first by their truename. However, I take it that if a person appears repeatedly by truename only, he would not likely be a spy.

[36] UCN/9 was found eight times in the NY traffic; presumably there were other unfound NY mentions and mentions in London traffic.

**1. The local head of the BAR, STEPHENSON, has returned here with KABAN [Churchill]. He told UCN/9 that the main reason for KABAN's journey here was a growing movement in the ISLAND [UK] for opening a second front in EUROPE and further because of the mood in the ISLAND [3 groups unrecovered]. The COUNTRY [U.S.] has promised [c% to supply] the ISLAND with maritime resources**

**[82 groups unrecovered]**

**the BAR and**

**[65 groups unrecovered]**

**PARK LONDON W. 11 Password for liaison: 'Greetings from Molly'. UCN/9 told ZVUK [Jacob Golos] that if he remained in the ISLAND he would help there [1 group unidentified] [6 groups unrecovered]**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 810, 29 May 1943, MAKSIM to VIKTOR is a very long, poorly recovered message (about 340 groups not recovered). I quote only from the first half of the message; the second half included some meet instructions and possibly references to Yugoslavia:

**Reference your No. 2267 [not available]:**

**1. I knew about UCN/9's departure. ZVUK [Jacob Golos] and the well-known local**

**[72 groups unrecovered]**

**compromising activities of the BAR STEPHENSON used**

**[33 groups unrecovered]**

**the BAR [3 groups unrecovered] [d% in the USA] STEPHENSON**

**[14 groups unrecovered]**

**Moreover the [d% measures] the BAR [d% took] were unacceptable to the KhATA [FBI], which objects to the BAR's subversive activity here. The BAR had to give up its agent network here to the KhATA. As a result [1 group unrecovered] work has shriveled up and the Military Attache in the country is returning to SIDON [London]. The BAR's fate in the future is unknown.**[37]

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**in SIDON about the work there he [c% said nothing] [7 groups unrecovered] on the acquisition of political information about the COUNTRY [U.S.]. UCN/9 does not know whether he will be connected in this work with the Embassy or**

**[remainder of message scrappily recovered, rlb]**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 952, 21 June 1943, LUKA to VIKTOR is another long, unevenly recovered message. In this message, a reply to a query from the Center, New York says they do not know about the organization called the British Security Coordination. But they report knowing people who the Center must have told them were connected to BSC. A simple explanation would be that KGB New York's agents, such as

[37] The FBI, especially from 1942 on did object to the work of the BSC (as did MIS and ONI). However, it is not absolutely certain here that the objection concerns the BSC operations in the U.S. It may concern British Secret Service work in Latin America, which the FBI also considered its preserve.

UCN/9, Belfrage, merely reported on the British Secret Service station in NYC without bothering to mention its cover name, BSC. The covernames not identified by my brackets in the text are identified following the message:

**Your No. 2691 [not available]**

**1. The organization 'British Security Coordination' is not known to us. We have taken steps to find out what it is. We will report the result in the next few days.**

**We know Aleksandr Yakolevich HALPERN. We presume that it is he who is meant. HALPERN has been reported on repeatedly by MARS, KAVALERIST, OSIPOV, UCN/9, SERES, KOLO and an agent**

**[12 groups unrecoverable]**

**see paragraph [4 groups unrecovered] 283 and 355.**

**[53 groups unrecovered]**

**KERENSKEJ was [1 group unrecovered] Council of Ministers [1 group unrecovered] October Revolution fled to England**

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**his wife Salome**

**[23 groups unrecovered]**

**H. [i.e. HALPERN] is one of the heads of the British COMPETITORS here who for cover [1 group unrecovered] have a number of official posts in the INSTITUTE [4 groups unrecovered] post of assistant to STEVENS [presumably an error for William Stephenson, rlb] head of the BAR and organizer of the British Consulate. He apparently has contacts with the Labor Party. He is described as an enemy of the USSR. He has been admitted [4 groups unrecovered] with the INSTITUTE in CARTHAGE and TYRE. He is conducting active work among Russian and all European [1 group unrecovered]. He maintains contact with [1 group unrecovered]ER, the S[ocial] R[evolutionary] ChERNOV and [5 groups unrecovered] DUBOIS, the Hungarian UCN/41, Otto HA ....**

**[60 groups unrecoverable]**

**[24 groups unrecovered]**

**is described as a person hostile to us. Please sanction**

**[24 groups unrecovered]**

Some of the names and covernames in the foregoing:

HALPERN = Alexander Halpern, head of the Minorities Section of BSC; Kerenskij's secretary in the Russian Provisional Government in 1917.

MARS = Vasilij Sukhomlin

KAVALERIST = Sergej Nikolaevich Kurnakov (KGB agent)

OSIPOV = Prince Nikolaj V. Orlov (KGB agent)

UCN/9 = Cedric Belfrage (KGB agent)

SERES = Dr. Ivan Subasic, Yugoslav politician (OSS confidante, but also a KGB agent)

KOLO = Sava N. Sosanovic, same situation as for SERES

• NY —> Moscow, No. 974, 22 June 1943, MAKSIM to VIKTOR contains New York's reply to the Center's questions about British Security Coordination. Covername GAVR may have been Gregory Sebba, an Austrian refugee employed by BSC. Covername OFITsER = Captain Jan Fierlinger, Information Officer at the Czech consulate at NYC.

**Further to our telegram No. 528 [same as external 952, above, rlb]**

**1. GAVR reports that British Security Coordination is a British intelligence organization**

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

**with the BAR. (This is evidently UCN/9's go-between whose name he did not give us.)**

**HALPERN is, in fact, concerned with this organization. He**

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

**HALPERN works chiefly on questions**

**[22 groups unrecovered]**

**2. In connection with the processing of OFITsER ...I [3 groups unrecovered].**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1430, 2 September 1943, MAKSIM to VIKTOR, though poorly recovered, concerns Jacob Golos's handling of Belfrage and brings C.P. chairman Earl Browder into the picture:

**UCN/9 returned to the ISLAND [UK] and**

**[141 groups unrecoverable]**

**[25 groups unrecovered]**

**ZVUK [Golos] says that after his trip to the ISLAND, UCN/9 has become [6 groups unrecovered] will be the ISLAND and the COUNTRY [U.S.] will be its errand boy.**

**At the first meeting with ZVUK UCN/9 talked not**

**[14 groups unrecovered]**

**meeting handed over to ZVUK 3 documents [4 groups unrecovered] to you by postal dispatch No. 8.**

**ZVUK [3 groups unrecovered] very carefully, trying to avoid serious clashes and is gradually drawing him into the work.**

**UCN/9 asked ZVUK to introduce him to RULEVOJ [Browder] for a chat on [4 groups unrecovered]. Considering that such a [1 group unrecovered] will help [1 group unrecovered] the work of UCN/9, ZVUK without our [1 group unrecovered] promised him that he would arrange a meeting.**

Serbs and Croats

The New York traffic contains information about KGB penetration of the Yugoslav government in exile and of the OSS elements involved with the guerrilla activity in Yugoslavia.

## *XVI. DUNCAN LEE AND KGB PENETRATION OF U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES*

In 1941, possibly with the help and urging of the British Secret Service and of William Donovan (in the Balkans on a mission for the White House, prior to the creation of the OSS), elements of the Yugoslav Army and various political groups threw out Prince Paul, the Regent, and replaced him with his young cousin King Peter. Prince Paul had been willing to make certain accommodations with the Germans, which is why he was replaced. This led almost immediately to the German invasion of Yugoslavia, during which King Peter and others in the government escaped to Britain. The Croatian Communist, Tito, then formed a large resistance movement which fought both the Germans and the non-Communist, Royalist resistance group headed by General Mihajlovich.

The British Secret Service, the Special Operations Executive (SOE) and the OSS provided considerable support to the Yugoslav guerrillas, especially after the Allies took the southern half of Italy in 1943 which put sea and airborne aid just across the Adriatic. The OSS had particularly close relations with two members of King Peter's government in exile, Dr. Ivan Subasic and Sava Kosanovic. They were both KGB agents, known respectively as SERES and KOLO. A Yugoslav seaman and union leader, Anton Ivancic, was also of interest to the OSS. Under covername CRUCIAN [KARAS] he too was a KGB agent.

Yugoslav matters were regularly reported upon by KGB agents inside the OSS; the KGB also controlled, as we will see, "the number 1 American [OSS] in Tito's headquarters."

A few dates and circumstances relating to the following messages:

- Dr. Ivan Subasic (SERES) had been the Ban of Croatia (governor) before the war. On 1 June 1944, King Peter, in exile in London, appointed him as Premier of Yugoslavia. General Donovan of the OSS had been in close touch with Subasic since August 1943, personally and through OSS officer Bernard Yarrow. In May 1944, Donovan took part in discussions in London between Yarrow, King Peter and SERES. Sava Kosanovic (KOLO) followed Dr. Subasic into the government.

- Anton Ivancic (CRUCIAN/KARAS) had arrived in the U.S. in 1940, a recent convert to Communism (before that he had been a police informant for the Royalist government). He and fellow countryman, Thomas Babin, a GRU agent, became leaders of two Yugoslav seamen's unions and came to the attention of the OSS as possible assets for special operations in Yugoslavia (Project KAY for example).[38] They both trained with the OSS, Ivancic traveling between the U.S. and the UK on union and OSS business. Both recruited Croatian communist seamen for the various causes they served.

[38] Project KAY looks very amateurish. Quoting from a CIA summary: "Project KAY was a project whose overall design was to detach the Balkan countries from the Axis by fomenting internal revolt. From the time it was first conceived, until the war progressed beyond the need for any such plan, KAY was a fluid project, subject to change, cancellation and reinstatement. At no time does it appear that all interested officials were in complete agreement as to its mission, particularly in reference to what indigenous guerrilla forces should be supported." Project KAY recruits, including Anton Ivancic and Thomas Babin, received OSS training from 17 May to October 1943. (Venona Collection, 56–027c)



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)



• NY —> Moscow, No. 1462, 9 September 1943, (address and signature not recovered), though very poorly recovered, mentions another KGB asset connected to the OSS; quoted in part:

**The IZBA suggested to KhAZAR [u/i] that he should go to Yugoslavia illegally**

**[23 groups unrecovered]**

**TITO and the IZBA**

**[56 groups unrecovered]**

**KhAZAR**

**[27 groups unrecovered]**

**[d% We consider] KhAZAR a probationer [agent] who is devoted to us**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 617, 4 May 1944, from MAJ mentions information received from SERES, the soon to named Yugoslav premier, Dr. Ivan Subasic.

**Your no. 1665 [not available]**

**SERES gives excellent personal reports on Tomo BABURICh and Pave POTsRNICh.[40] He knows both of them well and considers that they deserve complete confidence. One can get in touch by mentioning his name with the condition that the instructions of our man are followed. In order to prove the existence of contact with SERES [the rest of the message difficult to follow, rlb]**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 639, 6 May 1944, from MAJ relating to the forthcoming conference in the UK between SERES, King Peter, General Donovan and Bernard Yarrow of the OSS:

**Before leaving for the ISLAND, SERES talked to [Secretary of State Cordell Hull, General Donovan and someone named CAMPBELL who is unidentified, rlb]. CAMPBELL read SERES a telegram received by CAPTAIN [FDR] from KABAN [Churchill]. In SERE's opinion, [Cordell Hull's] assistant and [General Donovan] did not know about the**

[39] This quote is from a lifted OSS memo, not from a Soviet propaganda release.

[40] Political allies of SERES, presumably disposed to help the KGB.

**telegram. They both fully agreed with S. on the need to strive for the unification of all groups in his country with the Partisans. [General Donovan] asked what concrete measures S. meant to take with a view to uniting the Chetniks with the Partisans and agreed with his opinion that under no circumstances could MIHAJLOVIC be left in the government. [General Donovan] and YARROW are flying to SIDON [London] at the end of the month. SERES left for BALTIMORE on 5th May and from there he is flying to SIDON in a bomber.**

**[13 groups unrecoverable]**

**was [or: were] not necessary here but possibly will be required in SIDON.**[41]

- NY —> Moscow, No. 699, 17 May 1944, from MAJ describes the activities of KGB agent CRUCIAN (or KARAS), Anton S. Ivancic:

**CRUCIAN has been elected Chairman of the Trade Union of Yugoslav Seamen and in this connection he will go in the near future to SIDON [London], where he will take up his duties. The group which was sent to Yugoslavia and with which, with his mediation, we agreed on a password, arrived at its destination long ago. CRUCIAN received from it a report through BABIN's wife that his wife, whose maiden name is Vesela ShEVHhICh works on Tito's staff.**[42]

**Telegraph password and conditions of contact with CRUCIAN in SIDON.**

- NY —> Moscow, No. 817, 6 June 1944, from MAJ to VIKTOR contains another report from CRUCIAN:

**CRUCIAN reports that all the captains of Yugoslav merchant ships received from SIDON written instructions signed by a former vice-director of the Bank of YUGOSLAVIA, RUDOLF BICANCIC [5 groups unrecovered] to raise the flag of TITO on the ships, [2 groups unrecovered] [d% port] to get in touch with BICANCIC and await instructions from him. B. calls himself a representative of the liberation movement ..... Is B. acting upon instructions from TITO, or is this provocation?**

NY —> Moscow, No. 847, 14 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR contains instructions for meeting CRUCIAN that the Center is to pass on to London KGB:

**CRUCIAN is leaving for SIDON [London]**

**[43 groups unrecoverable]**

**Gate LONDON S.W. 7. Password: Our man in English – Your friend VLADO sends you greetings. CRUCIAN answers – Thanks very much, for I haven't seen him for a long time. C. is an exceptionally well-disciplined, able, modest man who is ready to execute any task without considering his personal safety. He has excellent abilities as an organizer and skill in managing people. He enjoys great confidence amongst the seamen. One can confidently [3 groups unrecovered] his country where he will get an opportunity of going from SIDON,**

[41] One might guess that this was a reference to the need for the use of tradecraft.

[42] Thomas Babin was a GRU agent.

**taking advantage of his official duties.**[43]

NY —> Moscow, No. 1042, 25 July 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR contains an exceptional exposition of the relationship of SERES, and his appointee KOLO, with the KGB. These were the men who the OSS hoped would lead a post-war democratic Yugoslavia:

> **KOLO is leaving by air for SIDON [London] on 25th July 1944. Your instructions have been passed on to him. Take into account the fact that KOLO [2 groups unrecovered] leadership. For example when HALPERN, who had arrived from SIDON, told KOLO that SERES was certain about the inclusion in the Government of KONSTANTINOVIC and TOPALOVIC**[44]
>
> **[8 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **He will have to be told not to take any important decisions without preliminary clearance from us.**
>
> **KOLO needs [3 groups unrecovered]. He has no personal ambition.**
>
> **[10 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **his behavior, one can take it that he is a man who is devoted to us and who understands that the well-being of his native country depends on our support.**
>
> **To establish contact our man tells KOLO that VLADO in TYRE [NYC] wishes to be remembered to him.**
>
> **A year ago KOLO let slip to SERES the fact that he was in contact with SERGEJ.**[45] **KOLO himself, in view of the position which SERES is occupying, suspects that the latter is in contact with us although S. has never betrayed to him his dealings with SERGEJ. This shows [2 groups unrecovered] KOLO the necessity for absolute secrecy. In the future one should go on patiently explaining the importance of this point to him.**
>
> **In view of the urgency of KOLO's departure there is no possibility [2 groups unrecovered] with him DEKA [u/i]. It is not at all likely that he [1 group unrecovered] SERES from SIDON.**

"The No. 1 American at Tito's Headquarters"

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1397, 4 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR completes the circle of Venona information about KGB penetration of the OSS's Yugoslav operations. We have seen examples of KGB penetration of OSS headquarters and OSS special operations, of British intelligence in New York, and of the Yugoslav government in exile — even the Premier, a close contact of General Donovan, head of OSS, was a KGB agent. The following particularly distressing message (discussed after the text) seems to show that the OSS's principal representative to Tito was also KGB:

> **Reference your No. 4502 [not available]**

[43] CRUCIAN reportedly had second thoughts about all this by the end of the war. He died in an automobile wreck in Yugoslavia in 1945, probably murdered by the KGB or Tito's people.

[44] Two non-Communist Yugoslav politicians.

[45] SERGEJ = Vladimir Pravdin, KGB sub-Resident in NYC.

**According to KhAZAR's[46] information, FARISH[47] (ATTILA) is in EUROPE at the present time. He is a parachutist in [c% the COUNTRY's] Army and recently met with KOLO. KhAZAR received from him [4 groups unrecovered] [d% fragmentary excerpts from] a newspaper.**

In 1970, CIA advised the FBI, with a copy to NSA, that FARISH, KGB covername ATTILA (both truename and covername are given in the text) was probably Major Linn Farish, and that, "Major Farish is cited in a number of OSS documents as 'the No. 1 American at Tito's Headquarters.'"[48] In supporting their belief that Linn Farish was the person in question, CIA noted (in addition to their belief that Farish's truename had been used):

- In September 1943 Major Farish (an American) transferred from the British Army to the U.S. Army. He had graduated from the RAF parachute school at Haifa and another jump course at Ramit–David, both in Palestine. Thus he was indeed a "parachutist in the COUNTRY's [American] Army" by the time of the message. In any case OSS records show him parachuting into German–occupied territory in Yugoslavia after he had transferred to the U.S. Army (that is, the OSS).
- As the Yugoslav government-in-exile leaders Dr. Subasic (SERES) and Sava Kosanovic (the KOLO of this message) attended conferences with Tito in Italy and Yugoslavia in August 1944, it was logical for Farish, as the OSS's senior representative to Tito, to have been in contact with KOLO as stated in the message.

Major Farish was killed in an aircraft crash near Athens on the night of 9–10 September 1944, while on an OSS mission. That is, he died about four weeks before the New York message — in CIA's opinion, NY KGB would not yet have known that Major Farish was posthumously awarded the DSC, the second highest U.S. decoration.[49]

CIA gave the FBI and NSA an extensive summary of the OSS records concerning Farish's special operations work for the British and the OSS during 1943–44, but fairly limited personal background data: born in California, graduate of Stanford University in geology, married, joined the RAF auxiliary in 1941; character references on his OSS statement of personal history characterized as: "No names of any apparent interest to us were cited." In his testimony to a Congressional Committee investigating communist activities, the American Communist (and movie actor) Sterling Hayden mentioned Farish as one of his associates in the OSS, but Hayden did not suggest, nor was he asked, about knowing Farish in any subversive connection.

This matter deserves further study. In his excellent memoirs of the OSS in Yugoslavia, Beacons in the Night, Franklin Lindsay discusses Farish whom he knew quite well. He describes Farish as pro-Soviet, indeed

[46] KhAZAR = unidentified covername connected to the OSS. See NY No. 1462, 9 September 1943, quoted earlier in this section, for another mention of this agent.

[47] Actually FER'Z in the Russian text. See the further discussion of this point.

[48] The CIA response was based on a NSA/GCHQ translation of 25 November 1970. Meredith Gardner's original translation of this message. [redacted] CIA probably did not receive the original translation, as Arlington Hall – CIA liaison on Venona had not yet been established. In the 1970 version the truename, as given by the KGB, was FER'Z, which CIA, NSA and GCHQ accepted as KGB New York's quick phonetic spelling – in Russian – as FARISH. In other words the KGB, suggested CIA, saw "no need to use the cumbersome Latin spelling", settling instead for the covername and the Russian phonetic of the truename. This message contains the only reference to covername ATTILA that has been found in Venona, presumably because he was overseas during the best readable period under control of KGB stations, most likely London, whose traffic has been lost.

[49] KGB NY was giving very peripheral reporting on ATTILA/FARISH who would surely have been under some other KGB control during the time he was in the British Army and abroad with the OSS.



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

a Soviet apologist but that Farish came to change his mind on this. In discussions during early 1994, Meredith Gardner told me that he thought it very unlikely that the Russians would have rendered the name Farish as FER'Z. He said that FERISh would have been a much more correct version.

Some Other OSS-related Venona Messages

Following are other KGB messages concerning the OSS, selected to show the variety of sources and information available to the Russians. As always, IZBA = OSS; sometimes THE COMPETITORS also means OSS.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 884, 8 June 1943, LUKA to VIKTOR shows that KGB NY even reported what could be gleaned from family letters of their agents serving abroad with the OSS. An extract:

> **UCN/6's wife received [5 groups unrecovered] description of his stay in the town of ALGIERS. From the letter one can gather that IZBA's group now**
>
> **[most of remainder unreadable]**[50]

• NY —> Moscow, No. 994, 24 June 1943, from LUKA describes Captain Emil Voska, an interesting character associated with the OSS and Office of War Information, who both the KGB and GRU were assessing. Some extracts from the message:

> **Your No. 2617 [not available]**
>
> **Captain Emil VOSKA should be known to you (see paragraph 17 of your letter No. 7 of 1942) from material previously sent by us. VOSKA .... an old professional COMPETITOR [i.e. an affiliate of a non-Soviet intelligence service, rlb] who carried out as far back as during the First World War here and in EUROPE (FRANCE, ENGLAND and CZECHOSLOVAKIA) extensive intelligence and counter-revolutionary work on tasks set by MASRYK and the American competitors.**[51]
>
> **According to information available to us and the NEIGHBORS [the GRU], VOSKA worked for some time for the IZBA recruiting agents, saboteurs and propagandists for dispatch to EUROPE.**
>
> **[the message then continues that VOSKA had been dismissed from the OSS but got back in, at least into the Office of War Information, and was working for the U.S. in Turkey on various covert projects, rlb]**
>
> **The NEIGHBORS [GRU] contemplated signing VOSKA on but received a negative reply from their chiefs.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1094, 1095, 7 July 1943, MAKSIM to VIKTOR is a very long confusing message (scrappily recovered) concerning the work of KGB agent covername OFITsER (Captain Jan Fierlinger of the Czech Information Agency in NYC). KGB sub-Resident Pravdin had met OFITsER "through a contact man" and learned that he had spent 18 years in Japan and was now in contact with the COMPETITION (in this case, the OSS). Several extracts from the message:

[50] However the message makes another reference, by truename (withheld) to "a former Spanish veteran", i.e. an American who had served in the Lincoln Battalion (Brigade) in the Spanish Civil War. The Lincoln Battalion, raised by the KGB, GRU and Communist Party formed an important part of the International Brigades — a source for KGB/GRU and later OSS recruiting.

[51] MASARYK = Thomas Masaryk, founder of the Czecho–Slovak Republic after World War One.

**He reported that the local COMPETITORS were seeking all kinds of information relating to us.**

**********

**The COMPETITORS approached OFITsER for information about the USSR. He only gave general information. Specifically they are seeking [not recovered]**

**********

**From there [apparently OSS and Office of War Information, rlb] he got documents on the USSR which were potentially of great interest. Not being in touch with us here, he could not photograph them but sent short extracts to SIDON [London] to be passed on to us.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1162, 17 July 1943, LUKA to VIKTOR reports information from their agent Maurice Halperin (ZAYaTs). Some extracts:

**ZAYaTs has handed over a copy of an IZBA document, marked [2 groups unrecovered], which was a report about [5 groups unrecovered]**

[the rest of the message concerns information from several sources in SIDON (London), information probably seen by ZAYaTs and passed on to the KGB. It may be a summary of the IZBA (OSS) report handed over by ZAYaTs that the NY KGB would be sending to the CENTER by courier, rlb][52]. The message concludes:

**Please telegraph immediately your evaluation of this report.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 940, MAJ to the 8th Department is particularly interesting because it comes from MUSE, an unidentified KGB source in the OSS with good access. I have excluded most of the geographic/agency coverterms and instead have put the true identities in brackets:

**MUSE reports:**

**1. According to the information of the Head of the 'Secret Funds' department of IZBA, Emerson BIGELOW, the [British] without the knowledge of the [Americans] have purchased several million Portuguese escudos to help the Polish government in exile. BIGELOW declares he got this information from the Polish COMPETITORS [intelligence service].**

**2. The Northern European Department of the Secret Intelligence Branch of IZBA closely watches the movement of our money in Europe. On the instructions of the [State Department], IZBA is trying to ascertain whether NEGRIN[53] is receiving money from [Moscow]. The [State Department] considers that the position as stated by NEGRIN with regard to the Spanish Junta serves only as cover for a different kind of activity on the instructions of [Moscow]. An agent of IZBA, Colonel GIL, who has deeply infiltrated in Spanish emigre circles, reported to his superiors that NEGRIN receives from SMYRNA**

[52] These reports from SIDON sources include one about a German peace initiative by a group of Army officers who intended to assassinate Hitler. Other reports from this source(s) concern post-war frontiers.

[53] NEGRIN = Juan Negrin, a pre-Franco Spanish politician in exile, believed to have been in league with the Soviets.

**a considerable sum of money. According to another report which has reached IZBA, CASADA is supported by a woman working for the COMPETITORS of the [UK].**[54]

**3. According to the opinion of a worker of the Roumanian section of the IZBA the Roumanian government is preparing for peace talks with [Moscow] which apparently**

**[8 groups unrecoverable]**

**stopped the issue to Germans of exit visas with the exception of diplomatic ones.**

**According to the information of the same worker the Roumanians are receiving gas masks from the Germans in exchange for other commodities. In his opinion this fact confirms the Germans' intention to use gas against the Red Army. For some time sealed railway cars have been leaving for Roumania with a directive forbidding them to be opened until HITLER's personal instructions are received.**[55]

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1389, 1 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR concerns an unidentified British intelligence initiative on which Donald Wheeler (IZRA) of OSS would be reporting. An extract:

**Materials about the conspiracy and [British intelligence], as it turns out, have to be obtained through IZRA and so I am passing the task on to VADIM [Gromov, the KGB Washington Resident].**[56]

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1438, 10 October 1944, from MAJ to the 8th Department. In this short message NY gives the Center a heads up, from Maurice Halperin (ZAYaTs), about OSS post-war planning:

**According to advice from ZAYaTs, [General Donovan] has finished a project for the organization of a branch of the IZBA for obtaining strategic information in Europe in the post-war period. The dispatch of IZBA people to SIDON [London] for this purpose is expected shortly. ZAYaTs expects to be sent temporarily to SIDON in January.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1454, 13 October 1944, from MAJ to the 8th Department also provided the Center with a summary of OSS planning for post-war activities concerning the USSR. Most of the message is not recovered. As in the previous message, one may assume that NY KGB sent the actual OSS report(s) to Moscow Center by courier. Covername CAUTIOUS (OSTOROZhNYJ in Russian) = Joseph Julius Joseph, KGB agent and head of the Civilian Economics Section, Far East Division of the OSS. Some extracts:

**According to a report from CAUTIOUS, the IZBA has developed and accepted a project**

**[49 groups unrecovered]**

**the [U.S.] against the USSR**

**********

[54] Note that NY KGB does not indicate if they know whether or not Negrin is actually KGB–connected (no covername is used) — they just report it straight. I assume CASADA is the truename of another Spanish politician in exile.

[55] An important intelligence requirement of the US/UK, and the Russians was to learn about German gas warfare capabilities and intentions. See Hinsley's Official History. As for the sealed railroad cars, it should be noted that the Germans and the Roumanians used this technique to murder Roumanian Jews.

[56] Note that this message provides a reference date for studying the transfer of control of KGB assets from NY to Washington. It will be recalled that many or most KGB assets in Washington continued under NYC control until late in the war. VADIM (Gromov) may have been the senior East Coast KGB Resident once MAJ departed the NY Residency to run the highest priority operations in San Francisco during the UN conference there.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)



**anti-Soviet position proceeding from [3 groups unrecovered] the USSR and the [U.S.] in future is unavoidable. T. [name withheld, rlb], an employee of the Planning Division of the IZBA who has pro-Soviet leanings, reported to CAUTIOUS that the new people being accepted for responsible posts in**

**[most of remainder not recovered, rlb]**

"a request by King Michael"

NY —> Moscow, No. 1484, 19 October 1944, from MAJ to the 8th Department, passes along diplomatic information obtained by Maurice Halperin [ZAYaTs] of the OSS:

**According to information of ZAYaTs:**

**1. In telegrams to the [State Department] dated 26 and 27 August, MURPHY passed on a request of King MICHAEL of Roumania for the dispatch to ROUMANIA of troops of the [U.S.] and the [UK] 'for moral support' [1 group unrecovered].**

**2. The Military Mission of the [U.S.] in IRAN will be left there until 1st March 1945. It has been decided that is the date on which its stay will end.**

"IZBA has passed on ..a list of 20,000 'reliable Germans'"

• NY—> Moscow, No. 1635, 21 November 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, contains a report from Greg Silvermaster (ROBERT), the major net controller often mentioned in this study. Only paragraph 2 is quoted:

**2. IZBA has passed on to the Army a list of 20,000 'reliable Germans' with whom IZBA considers it safe to have dealings. It is impossible to obtain the list here at the moment. Perhaps it could be obtained in [London]. An analogous list of Austrians has been compiled by the [British].**

**Reporting on China, Yalta, and Hungary**

[57] In her 1945 statement to the FBI, Miss Bentley had a great deal to say about the activities of Joseph Julius Joseph on behalf of the OSS, but she did not mention his sister. I assume the Bureau questioned her further about Emma Joseph but haven't searched for the records. Julius Joseph was one of those who received Christmas presents from the KGB via Bentley.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1836, 29 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR and the 8th Department transmits a report from Lud Ullman of the Air Staff (covername PILOT) about Nationalist China. The third paragraph discusses the strong position of the OSS in China and its cooperation with Chiang Kai–Shek's secret police: provision of weapons, training and the like. The last sentence of the message states: "Please advise on what questions about China we should send you information by telegraph" — a theme that we have seen before, i.e. what should be telegraphed vs. what can wait for the courier?

• NY —> Moscow, No. 55, 15 January 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR, covers five separate topics, the first being New York's query, "In connection with the forthcoming conference of the three [that is, the Yalta Conference, rlb] telegraph a rough list of questions on which we must lay particular emphasis." The second topic is OSS information on Hungary:

> **ROBERT [Greg Silvermaster] reports that: the Research Sector of the IZBA has compiled information about the ability of Hungary to pay reparations. According to the information the national income of Hungary will total 60–65 million dollars the first year following the conclusion of military operations with a drop in hostilities in the future. Hungary can pay in petroleum products, bauxite and agricultural products. She can export 16 million dollars worth of petroleum products a year.**

Another List of OSS People

• NY —> Moscow, No. 205, 10 February 1945, to VIKTOR contains a list of OSS officers, but none of the groups that would explain the context could be recovered. The recovered text says:

> **From [d% ROBERT] has been received a memorandum [16 groups unrecovered] in the memorandum it says: '[13 groups unrecovered] American occupation army in Germany with [13 groups unrecovered]**

The message then lists 15 Americans, by truename (one name may be missing) all of them OSS officers notable for their wealth and prominence. One would have to guess that is the purpose of the message: to give the Center a list of famous American names serving in the OSS (perhaps with the contingents entering Germany). The message is not sinister, but it is quite a list to behold as it includes: David Bruce,[58] Paul Mellon, Junius Morgan, John Auchincloss, Gordon Auchincloss, Lester Armour, Alfred DuPont, Allan Dulles[59] and Lloyd Cabot Briggs.

The Center, rather incredibly, asked for more information about these people, in Moscow —> NY, No. 173, 22 February 1945: "Try to obtain through ROBERT more detailed information on the workers of the IZBA, whom you list." Perhaps Moscow didn't have a Who's Who in their reference collection.

Nazi Money

• Washington —> Moscow, No. 3600, 21 June 1945, to the 8th Department quotes from an OSS report obtained by KGB agent ROUBLE (probably Harold Glasser of the Treasury Department):

> **ROUBLE's material.**

[58] Later U.S. Ambassador to the UK

[59] Future DCI

**Here are the contents of a letter of an employee of the Counterespionage Division of IZBA in [London], of 8th March this year, to the [Treasury Department representative in the UK]:**

**1. The head of our German Section has requested me to transmit to you the following information, dated 26th February this year and received from our representative in BERNE, SWITZERLAND.**

**2. [2 groups unrecovered] reliable informant stated that Nazi funds are being sent abroad not through ordinary banking channels but with the aid of individuals working in [2 groups unrecovered] banks or connected with them. In particular, it is reported that the following persons, who enjoy the confidence of the Nazi Party, [4 groups unrecovered]:**

**a. PILGER from the DRESDNER BANK,**

**b. SCHMOLL from the FROMBERG BANK in BERLIN**

**[67 groups unrecoverable]**

**f. VON KLEM from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,**

**g. LIKUS from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or RIBBENTROP's Bureau.**

**3. We believe that this list may [19 groups unrecoverable]**

Yugoslavia Again

• Washington —> Moscow, No. 3711, 29 June 1945, to the 8th Department is mostly unrecovered/unrecoverable. I believe it is the last exploitable OSS message in the U.S.< — >Moscow lanes. The information came from unidentified covername I.[60]

**I.'s materials. We are transmitting a telegram of a representative of the IZBA in Belgrade Lieutenant [name withheld]**

[very little of the rest of the message recovered except for a mention of the "leader of the legitimate government" and the name SMODLAKA who was foreign affairs minister in Tito's provisional government].

[60] Emma Joseph, who was to go to Ceylon on an OSS assignment had the covername IVY.

# XVII. THE WHITE HOUSE

## A. Introduction

This chapter describes KGB and GRU access, or attempted access, to persons close to President Roosevelt or President Truman, as well as to miscellaneous but high level political targets not covered elsewhere, such as Congressional staffs, the national political parties and even a governor.

I have excluded a number of White House-connected personalities who have appeared elsewhere in this study — Alger Hiss and Harry White for example. This chapter admittedly includes unconnected persons and events, for there is no Venona evidence of a specific KGB Line targeting the White House, or a White House agent network. From time to time there has been speculation about Harry Hopkins, President Roosevelt's closest advisor. He appears in Venona quite often, in non-sinister circumstances, under his true name, and is also a good candidate for a once-seen covername. Averill Harriman has many appearances in Venona, under two or three covernames, but never in a suspicious context.[1] Harriman's covernames fall into that "public figure covername" category in company with President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, General DeGaulle and many others. Having said that, there are some intriguing situations and personalities discussed in this chapter.

## B. "KAPITAN's Wife"

Two poorly recovered KGB messages contain references to their interest in targeting or recruiting Eleanor Roosevelt, the President's wife. Mrs. Roosevelt was much drawn to a wide range of liberal causes and admired, like most Americans, the Russian resistance to the Nazi invasion. Sometimes she agreed to speak to or appear with groups that were, unknown to her, Communist-controlled or influenced. Her confidante Joseph Lash (not found in Venona) had been a "near-communist" before the Soviet–German Pact of August 1939. He later said that he educated Mrs. Roosevelt on the various Communist groups trying to take advantage of her name and good nature. The FBI had an interest in Mrs. Roosevelt, Lash and others of their circle and Director Hoover reported to the President about this from time to time. In Spring 1943, when Lash and his girlfriend Trude Pratt, who was also close to Mrs. Roosevelt (as the KGB knew, see the message below), joined Mrs. Roosevelt in Chicago, the three were placed under physical and microphone surveillance by the Army CIC (Lash was then in the Army). The Venona references to Mrs. Roosevelt and some of her friends were not broken out until many years later and could have played no part in Director Hoover's interest in Mrs. Roosevelt's circle during the 1940s. The KGB messages:

[1] Likewise, some other prominent and sometimes controversial figures of the Roosevelt administration, such as Vice-President Henry Wallace and Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles, have been found in Venona only in benign, public-figure circumstances. Both, however, were of considerable interest to the FBI, Wallace for being a presumed Communist Party dupe (which he certainly was in his 1948 campaign for election as a third party candidate); and Welles because of drunken homosexual advances he had made to a porter on a train in 1940 — a situation that was covered up until 1943 when Welles was forced to resign. His protege, Laurence Duggan, was an important KGB agent found in Venona under covernames FRENK, SHERWOOD, PRINCE. While the KGB would undoubtedly have learned about Welles's homosexual incidents, we see nothing about this in Venona.

*XVII. THE WHITE HOUSE*

**Elizabeth Zubilin, covername VARDO and Vassili Zubilin, covername MAXIM. They planned "to process" Eleanor Roosevelt.**

• New York —> Moscow, Nos. 786–787, 26 May 1943, MAKSIM to VIKTOR is a very long, mostly unrecovered message — almost 400 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable. Covername KAPITAN = President Roosevelt. The message:

> **For processing KAPITAN's wife we [2 groups unrecovered] her great friend Gertrude PRATT, wife of the well-known wealthy Elliot PRATT**
>
> **[15 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **patroness and guide. In this line contact is being maintained with her by Aleksej [c% SOK]IRKIN, the official representative of the MOSCOW Anti–Fascist Student Committee [c% who arrived] [6 groups unrecovered] SYNDICATE [Soviet Foreign Ministry]. PRATT [d% displays] great interest in life in the USSR and Soviet**
>
> **[38 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **the latter circumstance for bringing VARDO into close touch with her with a view to**
>
> **[119 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**
>
> **or scientific worker.**
>
> **[87 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **[64 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **KAPITAN [or KAPITAN's wife]**
>
> **[71 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **for further processing.**
>
> **• NY —> Moscow, No. 1420, 31 August 1943, LUKA to VIKTOR, is unrecovered except for parts of two sentences:**
>
> **[75 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **Paul HAGEN. [1 group unidentified] is close to the wife of KAPITAN.**
>
> **[9 groups unrecovered]**

In the first message the New York KGB informs the Center they will use someone, probably but not certainly (note the two missing groups) Gertrude (Trude) Pratt "for processing KAPITAN's wife". The Russian word here translated as "for processing", is OFORMLENIE, a word frequently seen in KGB messages, with

slightly different translations given depending on the context. Meredith Gardner, and later GCHQ, wrote several short essays on this term of art. In 1953, Patrick FitzPatrick, GCHQ Venona representative at NSA suggested four groups of meanings for the OFORM words:

- Group A : "put/be taken into a job after due preliminary formalities"
- Group B : "throwing light on, investigating"
- Group C : "get something done, made legal, by carrying out necessary formalities"
- Group D : some combination of the above

FitzPatrick concluded that an all-inclusive, single English equivalent "seems elusive or impossible" and translations would have to be case-by-case.[2]

In 1950, Meredith Gardner had written this little essay on OFORMLENIE:[3]

> *OFORMLENIE – This word seems to mean generally 'habilitation for our service or enablement to serve us, by the prescribed procedure of checking and establishing reliability — by thus establishing the absence of compromising information.' The meaning is thus close to that of our 'clearance'. The decisive act of OFORMLENIE is probably performed higher up ...*

Gardner went on to suggest that "shedding light" on something or someone or "getting tips, pointers or leads" might be good definitions too.

Geoffrey Sudbury and Sean Massey, highly skilled Russian linguists with GCHQ, told me that "processing" was a good single word translation. So just what did this mean in the case of Mrs. Roosevelt? The KGB probably meant to "study" Mrs. Roosevelt to see if she could or should be recruited by them. To do this they were going to use, in some combination, Trude Pratt and Paul Hagen from her circle, and co-opt the Soviet propaganda representative Aleksej Sokirkin (who might have been KGB anyway). VARDO, was the KGB covername for veteran KGB officer Elizabeth Zubilin, wife of the New York (and later the Washington) Resident Vasilij Zubilin, who as covername MAKSIM signed the first of the two messages quoted above. The message says that VARDO would be brought, "into close contact with her with a view to ...". The "her" could be Gertrude Pratt or Mrs. Roosevelt.

In July 1943, that is between the two messages quoted above, MAXIM (and VARDO) transferred from NYC to Washington where he became Secretary of the Soviet Embassy. According to the Anonymous Letter of 7 August 1943, Zubilin/MAXIM was the "second secretary in the embassy of the USSR" and the "Director of Soviet intelligence here [that is in Washington or the U.S., rlb"]. Therefore, MAKSIM was the KGB Resident in Washington from July 1943 until he and VARDO left the U.S. in late August 1944. The Anonymous Letter described Elizabeth Zubilin/VARDO this way: "His [Zublin's] wife directs political intelligence here [and] has a vast network of agents in almost all departments including the State Department ..... put her under observation and you will very quickly uncover the whole of her network." Why did the Zubilins transfer to Washington? The obvious reason – that Washington was the appropriate place for the major KGB espionage effort – is somewhat contradicted by the Washington traffic volume and what we read in the New York traffic. Consider the following statistics for KGB traffic volume (I've put Washington readability in the chart; the information on NY readability appears in Chapter IX.):

[2] Venona Collection, 3337/box 18, FP/1, 15 January 1953.

[3] Venona Collection, 3337/box 18, attachment to XY–10, 11 August 1950. This is a British document prepared by Philip Howse, but Gardner was the linguist on the problem at that time (Howse was a cryptanalyst), so I assume Gardner wrote the essay.

*XVII. THE WHITE HOUSE*

| | 1943 |
|---|---|
| Washington —> Moscow | NY —> Moscow |
| 17 messages sent (6 in Nov; 11 in Dec.). None read. | 1007 messages sent |
| | 1944 |
| Washington —> Moscow | NY —> Moscow |
| 410 messages sent. None read. | 860 |
| | 1945 |
| Washington —> Moscow | NY —> Moscow |
| 2338 messages sent, 57 matched, 36 published. | 1199 |

The traffic volume shows that Washington KGB did not become preeminent until 1945, despite the fact that most of the KGB's agents were in Washington.[4] The hundreds of readable NY —> Moscow messages give no indication that New York was not running its own Washington agents until later 1944. Unfortunately, we cannot read any of the 1943 or 1944 Washington traffic. It is at least possible that Zubilin was sent to Washington for some other purpose than to take over New York's assets in Washington. Some possibilities:

1. To pursue the matter of "processing" Mrs. Roosevelt and her circle.

2. To run the illegal MER/ALBERT and begin working the transition in the methods of handling the Washington nets.

Some information on the other persons mentioned in the two messages quoted above:

Gertrude (Trude) Wenzel Pratt, aka: Trude Pratt, Trudy Pratt, Mrs. Eliot Pratt, Mrs. Joseph P. Lash (who she married after divorcing Eliot Pratt) was born 13 June 1908 in Singer, Germany. She was active in student groups in pre-Nazi Germany. In 1942 she had been elected General Secretary of an organization known as the U.S. Committee of the International Student Service, succeeding Joseph Lash who had gone into the Army. That organization, founded in 1920 under a different name published a magazine called 'Threshold'. Members of its executive committee included Mrs. Roosevelt, John W. Studebaker, and Archibald McLeish. In September the organization sponsored the International Student Assembly in Washington, and Aleksej Sokirkin attended as the representative of the USSR. In August of that year Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov had sent a communication to the U.S. ambassador in the Soviet Union asking him to transmit a letter from him to Mrs. Roosevelt concerning the assembly, which letter also asked that Mrs. Roosevelt extend his best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Pratt. Trude Pratt was a frequent visitor and overnight guest at the White House.

KGB defector Petr Derjabin later said that he recognized a photo of the aforementioned Aleksej Sokirkin as a KGB colonel assigned to the Secret Political Directorate in Moscow. However, the Venona message does

[4] MAXIM is not seen in Venona as a Washington KGB signatory — no one is: the 1943 and 1944 traffic, W —> M, could not be matched and therefore nothing could be read, including the signatures.

not use a covername for him.[5] He was in the United States from 1942–1944, at the Soviet Consulate, NYC and was active in cultural relations, student affairs and war relief. He was supposedly a protege of Andrei Vishinsky, sometime Soviet Foreign Minister.

Paul Hagen mentioned in the second message, aka: Karl Franck and Willi Mueller was born in Vienna and joined the Austrian Communist Party in 1913. He engaged in Party work in Germany in the 1920s. In the 1930s he formed the organization "New Beginners" for the relocation of refugees from Naziism. In the U.S. Hagen published a newsletter and raised money for his causes. Note that in the referenced message Hagen does not have a covername.

[5] He might not have been KGB; he might have been KGB but the NY Residency wasn't told; or it might not have been appropriate to use a covername under the circumstances.



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)



- GRU NY —> Moscow, No. 1350, 17 August 1943, from MOLIERE to the DIRECTOR. This message, which will be quoted in full in the GRU chapter, concerns various agent handling matters but contains one paragraph directly relating to the message quoted above:

> **5. The other names of the woman who gave SIMON information about talks with the President is Josephine Treslow.**

A possible interpretation of these messages: GRU source SIMON, either directly or through GRU net controller COX, informed the GRU Residency of "Josephine Treslow's" conversations with President Roosevelt ; Josephine Treslow is Josephine Truslow Adams, a confidante of Eleanor Roosevelt and the President. The FBI reported the following information about Josephine Truslow Adams:[6]

Miss Adams was of that famous New England family, a descendant of Presidents John Adams and John Quincey Adams. She met Eleanor Roosevelt in the mid–1930s through a mutual acquaintance. Mrs. Roosevelt became interested in Miss Adams's artwork and a close friendship developed during which she also came to know President Roosevelt. In the early 1940s, said Miss Adams, President Roosevelt gave her several confidential assignments such as the study of the Transport Workers and National Maritime Workers unions to determine if they would honor no-strike agreements. The President also asked her to report the feelings of various groups regarding a Presidential Pardon for C.P. chief Earl Browder, then serving a (short) prison term for passport fraud. Another time the President asked her to visit Browder to get his assurance that no third party would be formed for the 1944 elections.

Former Communist Louis Budenz told the FBI that Josephine Truslow Adams acted as an intermediary between the White House and Earl Browder, and he particularly recalled hearing about information she obtained relative to President Roosevelt's attitude toward Stalin.

Later, Josephine Truslow Adams gave the FBI additional details of her White House–Earl Browder connections. She said that in 1943 she was having almost weekly meetings with Browder following his release from prison. She also made frequent visits to the White House to see President and Mrs. Roosevelt. She said that the President did not like Chiang Kai-shek or his wife and confided these feelings to her. She was certain that she spoke to only two persons about this matter: Theodore Bayer and Earl Browder. She often saw Bayer during 1943, and Bayer, she said, "was constantly pumping her for information". This should clinch the identification, SIMON = Theodore Bayer, but the Venona translations consistently carry the qualifier "possibly".[7]

I have not found other references in Venona to Eleanor Roosevelt and have not looked at FBI or CIA records on her beyond those made available to NSA as part of the Venona project.

[6] Venona Collection, items 56–024 and 56–041, box D045.

[7] NSA/GCHQ did not always re-issue, or event hand-correct translations when new information, such as that reported by Miss Adams, became available. As Sean Massey told me, the Venona party did not maintain the translations with future historians in mind.

C. Who Was the Covername Known as "19"?

Probably the most intriguing unidentified covername in Venona is "19", found in a single message from May 1943: a conversation with the President about which "19" made a report to the KGB illegal MER (later covernamed ALBERT).

In this instance the covername "19" is that given by the KGB, and it is the only strictly numerical KGB covername that I've found in the U.S. <—> Moscow KGB traffic.[8] This covername is not to be confused with the numerical covernames assigned by NSA or GCHQ when the actual covername could not be recovered from the message text. That is, UCN/9 for example was the NSA/GCHQ term for a KGB covername that could not be retrieved; the same for Name No. 90 of the GRU–Naval traffic.

The message will be quoted in full, followed by a discussion of the various covernames. The message is NY —> Moscow, No. 812, 29 May 1943, from MER to VIKTOR:

> **"19" reports that KAPITAN [FDR] and KABAN [Churchill] during [b% conversations] in the [U.S.] invited "19" to join them and ZAMESTITEL openly told KABAN**
>
> **[10 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **a second front against Germany this year. KABAN points out that if a second front should prove to be unsuccessful, then this [3 groups unrecovered] harm to Russian interests and [6 groups unrecovered]. He considers it more advantageous and effective to weaken Germany by bombing and to use this time for '[4 groups unrecovered] political crisis so that a second front next year may prove absolutely successful.'**
>
> **ZAMESTITEL and**
>
> **[14 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **'. 19 thinks that KAPITAN is not informing ZAMESTITEL of important military decisions and that therefore ZAMESTITEL will have no exact knowledge about [1 group unrecovered] with the opening of a second front against Germany and its postponement from this to a future year. 19 says that ZAMESTITEL personally is an ardent supporter of a second front at this time and considers postponement**
>
> **[15 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **can shed blood**
>
> **[13 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **recently navigation between the USA and**
>
> **[39 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **vessels. The [U.S] hardly**
>
> **[9 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **'insufficient reason for delaying a second front.'**

Unfortunately, I do not believe either "19" or ZAMESTITEL can be identified with any degree of certainty.

The last NSA translation of this message (the first one had been in 1958), in February 1972, identifies ZAMESTITEL, which means "deputy" as, "probably Harry L. Hopkins, Special Assistant to the President".

[8] However, another unidentified covername is the alphanumeric NN–32.

*XVII. THE WHITE HOUSE*

CIA

That identification could be supported by the context and the translation of the covername. Earlier translations had suggested Vice-President Henry Wallace as the likeliest candidate for ZAMESTITEL/deputy. Before further discussion of this point, let's consider "19".

In 23 March and 10 April 1972 notes to Dr. Tordella, Deputy Director of NSA, Joan Callahan, then heading the NSA Venona effort, made the suggestion that "19" = Eduard Benes. Benes had been President of Czechoslovakia during the 1938 crisis, headed the Czech government in exile (in London), and then returned there as chief of state at the end of the war, only to once again leave after the KGB–supported communist workers' militia ended Czech democracy in 1948. He had the unusual distinction of twice surrendering his country without a fight. The CIA and British Secret Service reportedly learned later that Benes was a KGB agent — this has been mentioned from time to time in open sources. The following paragraphs summarize Mrs. Callahan's argument, which I base on her two notes to Dr. Tordella.

In her notes, Mrs. Callahan used the codename DINOSAUR for all references to Harriman.[11] Mrs. Callahan dismissed the notion that DINOSAUR/Harriman could have been *"19"*, especially because he had been identified in Venona, *"under three different covernames and all these references were in an innocuous overt sense where the use of a covername corresponded to the use of covernames for other high-level officials."* Mrs Callahan then went on to build her case against Eduard Benes. From her note of 23 March 1972:

*On the other hand I feel that there is much to support the identification of "19" as Eduard Benes. The relationships as revealed in #812 between "19" and the other participants in the conversations and the opinions which he expressed are far more likely, and the parallels which can be found in BENES' own memoirs are quite convincing. In addition the New York message #860 of 6 June 1943, this time signed by ZUBILIN [then the NY*

[9] See Chapter VII for a very early report from Golitsyn that verifies the espionage activities of Bill Weisband. Because that report came so soon after his defection, I consider it authentic. I doubt his later reports, certainly those that are discussed in this chapter.

[10] Mrs. Callahan kept an excellent set of policy and analytic papers, from the 1960s and 1970s, on a variety of Venona topics. The Angleton papers are not there, nor are they referenced in Mrs. Callahan's table of contents to her papers. I assume Dr. Tordella kept the material in question.

[11] David Wise, in his 1992 book Molehunt, made the first public mention that I've seen of the DINOSAUR project. Wise learned from retired CIA officers that Golitsyn had told Angleton's people that Averill Harriman had been a Soviet agent.

*Resident, covername MAKSIM], reports similar information from Vasilij SUKhOMLIN of the Czech Information Service in New York about BENES' conversations in Washington.*[12]

Dr. Tordella asked Callahan to expand on the Benes theory. In her reply of 10 April 1972, she repeated that the information in messages #812 (the "19" message) and # 860 (the Benes truename message) looked similar, suggesting to her that both involved Benes. She said that the Benes memoirs showed him at meetings connected to the Trident Conference, in Washington, as follows:

- 12/13 May 1943. Five hours with Roosevelt, Churchill, Hopkins, Hurban (Czech minister to the U.S.) and others at the White House.
- 13 May. With Harry Hopkins.
- 19 May. With Harry Hopkins.
- 30 May. With Sumner Welles (under-secretary of State)
- 6 or 7 June. Final meeting with Roosevelt. Hurban present.

Benes also wrote in his memoirs that he sent confidential reports about these meetings to the Czech government in London on 13, 19, 30 May and 7 June.[13]

Callahan concluded:

> *I at first argued against the identification of "19" as BENES on the grounds that the 6 June message used his true name while others (Fierlinger, Sukhomlin etc.) were referred to by their cover-names.*[14] *However, this is probably the significant point, i.e. that the '19' message was signed by the Illegal Resident [MER] while the BENES message was signed by the Legal Resident, Zubilin [MAKSIM], who may well not have know about BENES' [KGB] connections or, at least, didn't know the covername '19'.*

That second message we have been discussing, # 812, NY —> Moscow, 29 May 1943, from MAKSIM to VIKTOR follows this list of the truenames and covernames which appear in the message:

MARS = Vasilij V. Sukhomlin, employee of the Czech Information Service in the U.S.

KAPITAN = President Roosevelt

ChEN = Zalmond Franklin, in later messages; here probably a u/i covername or a garble

PAPENEK = truename of Jan Papank, Minister of the Czech government and head of the Czech Information Service

BENES = Czech President Eduard Benes, who visited the U.S. and Canada 11 May to 11 June 1943.

KABAN = Churchill

OFITsER = Captain Jan Fierlinger, Czech Information Service, NYC

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[12] Callahan closed her 23 March note with two interesting points. She wrote that the Angleton/Golitsyn papers contained a few references to cases and people unknown to her but which she did not think had any direct Venona ties or, "at least, that evidence of these ties has not yet appeared in the texts and therefore additional information is unnecessary at this time from the standpoint of exploitation." Second, she said that "Peter", that is Peter Wright of the British Security Service (and later the author of Spycatcher) had told her that he (Wright) had given KAGO access to American Venona, "in the context of the 'ELLI' holdings." She continued that the only ELLI in the Venona records was a message (clear text) that the defector Gouzenko had brought out of Ottawa; and ELLI = Kathleen Willsher (not Sir Roger Hollis).

[13] These messages would have gone from the Czech consulate in NYC. They must have been copied, but I do not know if they were read.

[14] Here Mrs. Callahan implies that the Benes idea was not originally hers, but she does not say whose it was.

MARS and OFITsER at least, and maybe CHEN and BENES were KGB agents. The message:

**MARS points out that KAPITAN**

**[25 groups unrecovered]**

**MARS. [1 group unrecovered] with [5 groups unrecovered] ChEN told PAPANEK and others that, as a result of BENES's discussion with KAPITAN, the latter agreed that the Baltic States,**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**KAPITAN merely stated that**

**[24 groups unrecovered]**

**this plan to KABAN who agreed with the first part about the USSR but refused to take on any obligation with regard to the war.**

**A conversation took place between ChEN and OFITsER according to which KABAN brought some German peace proposals here. Rumors about this apparently originate from one of the persons escorting KABAN**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

I do not see the similarity between the two messages. However, BENES could well have been "19", but we cannot know that by comparing the two messages. Mrs. Callahan's point that the illegal, MER, would have handled sources not known to the regular Resident, MAKSIM, is not impossible, but is not otherwise supported by what has been found in Venona.

I suppose that ZAMESTITEL is either Harry Hopkins or Vice-President Wallace. The context is not sinister and either one of them (though Hopkins is far more likely) might have been with the President and Prime Minister, with "19" invited to join the three of them. This is the only discovery of that covername. However, in messages of 1944 and 1945, Hopkins is referred to by his truename. Wallace had KGB covername LOTsMAN (CHANNEL – PILOT) in a message of 5 June 1943 (and five messages of 1944), meaning that if his covername was ZAMESTITEL in No. 812, then it was changed to LOTsMAN in the next few days. HARRIMAN's covernames, MEN in 1944 and KAPITALIST in 1944 and 1945, were found in Venona five times.[15]

The only hope of resolving this is to review the records of the TRIDENT Conference to identify everyone who participated in the main meeting and in supporting and side discussions. Readily available sources mention the above persons plus the American and British Chiefs of Staff, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Secretary of War Stimson. I assume that John J. McCloy also participated (a recent biography doesn't confirm this, however). Curiously, none of the many hundreds of FBI and CIA reports in the NSA Venona archives concern the agent "19" message, suggesting to me that such reports, which surely must have been sent to NSA, were bundled into the DINOSAUR working file and later destroyed or placed in some other file. About the only thing I am fairly certain of, from the context of the first message, is that "19" is not Harry Hopkins: considering his closeness to Roosevelt, he would not have been "invited" to join Roosevelt and Churchill — he would already have been there — and would not have had to depend on the Vice-President of all people to learn inside

[15] Mrs Callahan mentioned three covernames for Harriman, but I've only found these two.

information (that is if we assumed that ZAMESTITEL = the Vice-President).[16]

D. KGB Covername PAZh — Lauchlin Currie?

Lauchlin Currie, a long-time assistant to President Roosevelt, was certainly a KGB asset, though he may fall somewhere in between a recruited agent and a dupe. Section I. of Chapter III contains a long discussion of Currie's report to the Silvermaster net, in approximately Spring 1944, that the U.S. was on the verge of breaking the Soviet diplomatic code.

Covername PAZh (PAGE, as in a servant in a royal court) has been found in Venona eight times, including two Moscow —> NY messages, the remainder NY —> M. All translations, and the "Black Book" (the listing of all covernames and mentions in Venona), carry PAZh as "possibly Lauchlin Currie". In spite of pretty good evidence, the identification was never upgraded to "probably" or certainly. One reason might be that the clinching message translation, a first-time one at that, and not a re-issue, did not appear until April 1980, at the very end of the Venona program. Following are seven PAZh translations:

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1317, 10 August 1943, address, signature and most text unrecoverable:

**PAZh turned over to AILERON a memorandum about the [c% political position of the USA] which was [1 group unrecovered] for the BANK [State Department]**

**[354 groups unrecoverable]**

Covername AILERON = Abraham George Silverman, an important KGB asset (for Air Force planning and technical information) in the Silvermaster net. In her 1945 statement, and later interviews, Elizabeth Bentley told the FBI that Currie had passed the "Soviet diplomatic code" information to Silverman, and that he was especially close to Silverman.

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1431, 2 September 1943, address and signature not recovered. This was the message first translated in 1980. PAZh is mentioned in the first paragraph, the rest of the message (not quoted) concerns others. The FBI had first come into contact with Lauchlin Currie during 1943, when they were conducting an investigation of Greg Silvermaster. Currie told the Bureau that Silvermaster was not a Communist. In the following excerpt we probably see part of NY KGB's report to the Center about that interview. Covername ZVUK = KGB net controller Jacob Golos; PAL = Silvermaster; KhATA = the FBI:

**ZVUK has reported that the KhATA has resumed investigation of the case of PAL. A few days ago two representatives of the KhATA visited PAZh and began to [1 group unrecovered] about PAL in particular is he a FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN [member of the C.P.]. PAZh apparently replied that he knows PAL [3 groups unrecovered] FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN organizations he does not [3 groups unrecovered] of PAZh, what [3 groups unrecovered] the representatives of the KhATA replied that**

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

NY —> Moscow, No. 900, 24 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, contains President Roosevelt's views on De Gaulle and the Russo–Polish border, as reported by PAZh:

**According to PAZh's information, KAPITAN's reluctance to recognize RAS's [De Gaulle's] government is explained by the fact that he is striving to compel the French to take a more liberal position with respect to the colonies. PAZh expresses his certainty the**

[16] I do not know if Hiss was at the conference; same for Harry White.

**KAPITAN considers the USSR's conditions for the Polish–Soviet border to be acceptable and that he will try to win MIKOLAJCZYK over to a more tractable position.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1243, 31 August 1944, SERGEJ to VIKTOR, concerns the management of KGB nets in Washington and the importance of PAZh to some of the proposed rearrangements. The message poses some difficulties for the PAZh = Currie matchup, discussed following the text. The covernames in this message:

AILERON = Abraham George Silverman

DONALD = Captain Ludwig Ullman

ROBERT = Greg Silvermaster

PIK = possibly Virginius Frank Coe

The message, less an unrelated final paragraph:

> **Your No. 3686 (not available). Your proposal about using AILERON as a group leader cannot be realized for the time being, as the management has decided on the transfer of AILERON's and DONALD's branch to a provincial town which will make it all but impossible to use them.[17] In order to stay in [Washington] A. proposes to resign [c% and get from] ROBERT a situation in his establishment. Although PAZh, who is practically the master of the establishment, is in strained relations with A. and will evidently be against taking him on, ROBERT hopes to influence PAZh through PIK. ROBERT admits that the concentration of people in the one establishment is inadvisable, but thinks that this is the only thing to do. For DONALD who is on military service, postponement is impossible. He and A. are making an attempt to stay in the old institution but to transfer to another branch that is remaining in [Washington], but hopes for success**

**[21 groups unrecoverable]**

The problem in this message is the phrase that PAZh, "is practically the master of the establishment". At this date, Currie was probably Deputy Administrator of the Foreign Economic Administration; but he also spent some time filling in for Harry Hopkins, and would resume (if he ever completely severed) his administrative duties with the President. ROBERT (Silvermaster) and PIK (Coe) worked in Treasury, the Bureau of Economic Warfare, and elsewhere during the war.[18] "The establishment", therefore might be one of several agencies, any of which it could be said were being run by Currie, because of his background and clout. I would say that this message improves the case that PAZh = Currie.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1463, 14 October 1944, address and signature not recovered, should be read in conjunction with the section in Chapter III that concerns Currie and the "Soviet diplomatic code" for it is just possible that this message deals with that subject. Note the involvement of the illegal ALBERT, to who Elizabeth Bentley first reported Currie's information — she had gotten it from Silvermaster [ROBERT], who received it from Silverman [AILERON]. Only Bentley is missing from the message. Bentley and one other source believed that Currie passed the information in Spring 1944, but this message, if it in fact concerns that subject, could be a wrapup report about the net's unsuccessful efforts to learn more (such as which code was

[17] The Air Material organization of the Air Staff (headed by General Bennett Meyers, who has been already been described) was to be re-located to Wright Patterson Air Force Base, in Dayton, Ohio. Silverman and Ullman stayed at the Pentagon.

[18] Further, I believe that the Bureau of Economic Warfare merged into the Foreign Economic Administration. Currie was deputy administrator of the latter.

about to be broken). Otherwise the subject under discussion in this message is unknown. Most of the message, which was multi-part is missing, and the following is all that could be recovered:

> **PAZh told this to AILERON, ALBERT, and ROBERT. ROBERT personally [1 group unrecovered]**[19]
>
> **[56 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **this purpose to curtail the group's work for us for a few months. ALBERT agreed and**
>
> **[64 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **in [Washington] or nearby. In his note ALBERT tells about ROBERT's business proposition.**[20] **Telegraph instructions.**

Moscow —> New York, No. 143, 15 February 1945, from VIKTOR, and the next message show the Center trying to get the regular KGB closer to PAZh, much like they wanted to do with others controlled by ROBERT and STUKACH (successor to Golos). The illegal ALBERT is also to be consulted. This message consists of four unrelated internal messages, the third quoted as follows:

> **Find out from ALBERT and ROBERT whether it would be possible to approach PAZh direct.**
>
> **State what you [d% know] [11 groups unrecovered]**

Moscow —> NY, No. 253, 20 March 1945, from VIKTOR to both MAJ and ALBERT, that is the legal and the illegal Residents, perfectly coincides with Elizabeth Bentley's descriptions of Currie as a not-quite-recruited asset. This message, quoted in an earlier chapter to show the ALBERT vs. ROBERT problem, is quoted again in full:

> **Your 224. [not available]**
>
> **The proposal of ALBERT and ROBERT**
>
> **[55 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **ALBERT [3 groups unrecovered] ROBERT with P. [PAZh?]**
>
> **[41 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **We consider that in this case ALBERT and ROBERT have displayed excessive hastiness. Entrust to R. the leadership [2 groups unrecovered] P..[PAZh?] ROBERT should trust [10 groups unrecovered] P. [presumably PAZh] trusts R., informs him not only orally, but also by handing over documents. Up to now PAZh's relations with ROBERT were expressed, from our point of view, only in common feelings and personal sympathies. [6 groups unrecovered] question of more profound relations and an understanding by PAZh of ROBERT's role. If ROBERT does not get P.'s transfer to our worker, then he [or his] [7 groups unrecovered] raising with PAZh the question of P.'s closer complicity with ROBERT.**

[20] Silvermaster and Ullman wanted to buy a farm and develop a civilian airport on the land after the war. The KGB saw the farm in terms of operational security.



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

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A closing item on Lauchlin Currie: he had sponsored Paul Hagen, generally believed to have been a Soviet agent, for entry to the U.S. See section B. earlier in this chapter for a truename Venona reference to Hagen in connection to Eleanor Roosevelt.

E. Bribery and a White House Official

Two messages describe in some detail the efforts by KGB New York agents to obtain transit visas for a KGB officer couple being sent from the Soviet Union into Mexico for special operations there: probably anti-Trotskyite activities; the effort to get Trotsky's murderer out of prison. These two KGB officers, Nicholas and Maria Fisher, had the joint covername THE PAIR (ChETA in the original Russian), which Meredith Gardner also translated as THE COUPLE. By late 1944 they had a new covername: THE REEFS (RIFFY). They appear in Venona 12 times, but the traffic does not clearly show why they were so important or why the KGB had so much trouble getting them into the U.S. and on to Mexico. Our interest here is the White House, and David K. Niles, another of President Roosevelt's administrative assistants.

• The first of two messages relating to Niles and his circle: NY —> Moscow, No. 786, 1 June 1944, to VIKTOR, signature not recovered. Covername TENOR (later BASS) was KGB agent Michael W. Burd, who lived in Philadelphia and New York, operating under the cover of the Midland Export Corporation which had connections to AMTORG. Quoted and summarized:

> **There are three possible ways of obtaining a transit visa for THE PAIR:**
>
> **1. The normal way – TENOR will do everything himself. Will take several months, but the result will be favorable.**
>
> **2. Through the lawyer K. [name withheld] – somewhat quicker, will cost 300–400 dollars. Both methods are lengthy as they will involve investigations.**
>
> **3. Through KAPITAN's [FDR's] advisor, David NILES – will take 3–4 days, will cost 500 dollars. Round NILES there is a group of his friends who will arrange anything for a bribe. Through them TENOR obtains priorities and has already paid them as much as 6000 dollars. Whether NILES takes a bribe himself is not known for certain. T. has talked to them about the [d% payment]**
>
> [the rest of the message concerns tickets and visas for Mexico, though New York also reports that "TENOR declares the latter way is one hundred percent successful and there will not be any investigation. I recommend the third method", i.e. working through Niles and his bribe-taking associates].

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1102, 1103, 2 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR is a very long message giving instructions for THE PAIR about U.S. and Mexican visas, the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, passports etc. Curiously, the message opens with "MAKSIM has asked us to pass on the following" — a fairly rare example of NY acknowledging that there is also a KGB Resident in Washington (where KGB NY does much of its business too). The last sentence of paragraph 3 and all of paragraph 4 (the final paragraph) follow; BASS = Michael Burd, who was covername TENOR in the previous message:

> **Should complications arise THE PAIR are to telegraph BASS and you/me so that measures can be taken and fresh pressure brought to bear. According to BASS's information there should be no complications.**

**4. For your information we advise how the business of getting a visa for the COUNTRY [Mexico]. To begin with NILES refused to intervene in the case, explaining that he had only recently interceded for one refugee and recommended approaching Congressman KLEINS. The latter did not [6 groups unrecovered] and it was only then that NILES intervened. The affair was held up because of the [Democratic] Party Convention and was actually settled in the last six days. All documents, telegrams and vouchers for money orders, the parcel and the deposit were received by BASS today in an envelope of the TEMPLE [White House] [8 groups unrecovered] from the BANK [State Dept]. The business [1 group unrecovered] extremely sound and there is every chance of success. The BANK then asked the Foreign Ministry of [Mexico] about [9 groups unrecovered]**

THE PAIR did not enter the U.S. anyway, at least not under the names Nicholas and Maria Fisher. Their case reappears in the chapter about Special Operations. Meredith Gardner first published a translation of the David Niles message in the summer of 1948, in one of his Special Studies (1948 was a presidential election year — another example of Governor Dewey's bad luck with Sigint not available to him).

F. Covername MOLE :Some KGB Assets with Access to Congress and the Democratic Party

The FBI identified Venona covername MOLE [KROT in Russian] as Charles Kramer, a member of the PERLO net activated by Jacob Golos and C.P. chairman Earl Browder in late 1943, though Elizabeth Bentley did not begin working with them until February 1944 (See Chapters XIII. and XIV.) Some, or all the members of this net had formerly been GRU, from the Whittaker Chambers era. NSA either did not accept the FBI identification or chose not to use it in the translations where all mentions of MOLE are footnoted as "unidentified covername" (the same for the Black Book). One difficulty may have been caused by the FBI's almost simultaneous identification of covername PLUMB (LOT) as also being Kramer. However, this doesn't look like anything other than a covername change not found in Venona, as the covernames do not overlap (PLUMB/LOT was used in 1944).[21]

In 1945 Elizabeth Bentley told the FBI that at a meeting in 1944, Kramer had told her he would be able to furnish "Capitol Hill Gossip" from his Congressional staff and Democratic Party employments. Kramer came to Washington in 1933 to work in the Department of Agriculture, subsequently working in other agencies. From 1943–1946 he worked for the Senate Subcommittee on Technological Mobilization (the Kilgore Committee), the Senate Subcommittee on Education and Labor, and the Democratic National Committee. Following are four MOLE messages from late June 1945, the first three from the same day, 22 June, by which date most KGB reporting was by the Washington Residency.[22]

• Washington —> Moscow, No. 3612. 22 June 1945, from VADIM to the 8th Department. VADIM = Anatolij Gromov, KGB Resident in Washington:

**Information from MOLE. Senator KILGORE**

**[14 groups unrecovered]**

**with GERMANY, intending instead of erroneous**

[21] There are several long covername change messages in Venona, but we know these were not all-inclusive and that other covernames were changed in messages not recovered or by other means.

[22] NSA read only about 1.5% of KGB Washington's traffic of 1945 — a very high volume year, probably the most important and busy times ever for the KGB.

**[37 groups unrecoverable]**

**consultations at KILGORE's who was to have begun the negotiations on Friday 22 June.**

**[58 groups unrecoverable]**

**by the consultations and to tell KILGORE that the latter should postpone these consultations until the completion of the resolution which was introduced by the leaders of [Latin America]. MOLE assumes that SAILOR [President Truman] [2 groups unrecovered] in the press and in the Senate**

**[a fragment and then 30 groups unrecovered or unrecoverable]**

• Washington —> Moscow, No. 3706, 29 June 1945, to the 8th Department, is the first of three MOLE messages sent that day, possibly because of the different subjects being reported upon:

**Information from MOLE. A former employee of the Office of Education, Alice BARROWS[23]**

**[117 groups unrecoverable]**

**industrialists hope, by bribes and threats, to say nothing of [6 groups unrecovered] to achieve a transfer to their [8 groups unrecovered] NAKED [u/i covername], [5 groups unrecovered] concerning NAKED**

**[14 groups unrecovered]**

**SAILOR [Truman] does not support him. NAKED's doubts which were recently aroused by BIDDLE [U.S. Attorney General]**

**[69 groups unrecoverable]**

• Washington —> Moscow, No. 3709, 29 June 1945, VADIM to the 8th Department, reports MOLE's conversations with two Democratic Party staffers: George Willison, Assistant to the Publicity Director of the Democratic Committee and Sam O'Neal, the Publicity Director of the DNC. He also reports the duties of DNC chairman Robert E. Hannegan, who, with the other two went on a White House mission to the UN conference in San Francisco:

**Information from MOLE. In a conversation with George WILLISON**

**[52 groups unrecoverable]**

**reporters. The anti-Soviet campaign in the American press, which has been sharply intensified since the beginning of the [San Francisco UN] conference is the direct result of the influential delegates, of the British and of [Anthony] EDEN. He blames for this in part the press and the technique of the conversations which gave the delegates the opportunity to arrange behind the scene discussions with the reporters who, in accordance with the instructions of their editors, tried to get as 'slanted' as possible news. Sam O'NEAL, Publicity Director of the Democratic Committee, and WILLISON went to BABYLON [San Francisco] on the orders of HANNEGAN and the White House , to whom they will they [b% in this case] will report their impressions. One of the functions of WILLISON was 'to enlighten the White House about the state of affairs without bureaucratic**

[23] Alice Prentice Barrows was an old-time Communist active in Chicago and elsewhere.

**processing,' that is, he reported everything to O'NEAL [c% who reported] to the White House.**

Washington —> Moscow, No. 3710, 29 June 1945, from VADIM to the 8th Department, passes on more of MOLE's conversations, with Lee Pressman and possibly others about important American businessmen. The opening of this message is quoted, followed by a summary of the rest of the text:

**Information from MOLE. As Lee PRESSMAN told MOLE [10 groups unrecovered] to meet Joyce O'HARA, representative of the American Chamber of Commerce ....**

[summary of rest of message: Lee Pressman, General Counsel for the CIO probably told MOLE about a new group within the American Chamber of Commerce that would include Henry J. Kaiser, William Green, president of the AF of L and Philip Murray, president of the CIO. The President of the American Chamber of Commerce, Eric Johnson, provided some characterization of the groupings of U.S. business leaders and their attitude toward the Soviet Union (re war, trade etc.)].

KGB agent Samuel Krafsur, covername YaZ (IDE), an American working for TASS in New York, provided important recruiting leads, such as reported in the following long message concerning an American writer about to become special assistant to the chairman of the Democratic National Committee. He would take up that post with the DNC upon returning from a trip to Moscow. KGB New York proposed to VIKTOR that this person be recruited while in Moscow.

NY —> Moscow, Nos. 777–779, 25 May 1945, SERGEJ to VIKTOR, reissued five times by NSA/GCHQ, is quoted in full as follows:

**B. [name withheld], who is a lead of YaZ and has already been reported upon, has left for SMYRNA [Moscow] as a member of the [U.S.] delegation to the Reparations Commission. B. – 40 years old [1 group unrecovered], of Russian–Jewish extraction, married, has**

**[32 groups unrecovered]**

**North Washington Boulevard in the city of ARLINGTON, state of VIRGINIA. Formerly he lived for a time in an artists' colony organized by the ROOSEVELT Administration during the depression. He took an active part in the collection of funds[24]**

**[25 groups unrecoverable]**

**....S he wrote books for children.[25] In 1943 he worked in the Press Section of the Department of Justice where he was given the job of writing speeches for BIDDLE and other chiefs.[26] B. prepared all the materials on his own initiative, without having them approved by [1 group unrecovered]**

**In 1944 he took a post in the National Democratic Committee, where, working under HANNEGAN, he wrote speeches for the leaders of the party for the election campaign.**

[24] This is only the second mention I've found in the traffic to Arlington, Virginia. The first probably concerned Arlington Hall (See Chapter VII) — site of the Army Signal Security Agency. This mention merely reports B.'s place of residence. Note also that in this context the KGB, appropriately, uses Roosevelt's truename rather than his covername, KAPITAN. The reference to "collection of funds" probably relates to the Spanish Civil War or Russian War Relief.

[25] The "S" would be the last letter of B.'s pen-name (an old New England type name). The letters before the "S" were not recovered.

[26] Francis Biddle, Attorney General of the United States.

**HANNEGAN, who is to be appointed Postmaster General, took B. on as his special assistant at a salary of ten thousand dollars a year. B. will take up his duties when he returns from [Moscow].**

**YaZ has known B. about 5 years and describes him as a very progressive fellow who is well disposed towards us. He has often expressed a desire to live permanently in the USSR. During the past year [c% he has been maintaining contact] with the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN [members of American C.P.].**

**Having regard to the position he is to occupy in the future and his connections in the Democratic organization B. could become a valuable probationer [agent]. I would recommend using B.'s trip to [Moscow] for working on him and [possibly] signing him on. [c%By] obtaining information on the work of the delegates of the [U.S.] you could check for yourselves on the spot his potentialities.**

**[31 groups unrecovered]**

**YaZ [2 groups unrecovered] in CARTHAGE [Washington].**

**[4 groups unrecovered] YaZ [b% and] his family, work and so on depending on how B. will [5 groups unrecovered] acquaintance in the direction necessary to us. At the meeting with YaZ before departure B. insistently inquired [2 groups unrecovered] in [Moscow] acquaintances to whom he wanted to send greetings. If you consider such an alternative acceptable, upon your request we will communicate a description of YaZ and his wife and further facts about them, so that there should be no [2 groups unrecovered] attempt on B.'s part to check whether or not our journalists really know YaZ.**[27]

G. Presidential Analyses by the KGB

Several New York KGB messages discuss the Republican Party and its 1944 Presidential candidate, Governor Thomas E. Dewey. Following are two short examples:

NY —> Moscow, No. 658, 9 May 1944, from MAJ shows the connection between the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the KGB. The covernames in this message:

GRANDPAPA [DEDUShKA]: NY Consul General Evgenij Kiselev, a clean diplomat.

BEAR CUBS [MEDVEZhATA]: the Republican Party

FIST [KULAK]: Governor Thomas E. Dewey

the SYNDICATE: Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The message:

**GRANDPAPA had a chat [4 groups unrecovered] with the chief candidate of the BEAR CUBS (henceforth FIST) about the latter's invitation. If the SYNDICATE has not advised you about this I can pass on the contents of the chat, which was of interest, from what GRANDPAPA related.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1048, 25 July 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, contains at least three separate subjects. The first internal message is quoted below.

[27] A few other items from B.'s resume not reported by the KGB: in 1943 he worked for Senator Claude Pepper of Florida; he did some speech writing for President Roosevelt in 1944. After the war he received a fellowship from a foundation to "write a book for young Americans about the youth of the Soviet Union".

**On 9th July SUK [u/i] had a confidential chat with BEAR who expressed his opinions on a number of questions connected with the election campaign.[28]While regarding FIST [Dewey] as 'a rising star' who 'would probably become president' sooner or later, BEAR at the same time expressed his conviction that KAPITAN [FDR] would get a 'huge majority' in the elections. As the chat took place before the convention, advise whether to telegraph more.**

Here are a group of messages containing analyses by the American Communist Party, MAJ and SERGEJ (the Resident and sub-Resident) of the 1944 election campaign, and the succession of Harry Truman in 1945 upon President Roosevelt's death.

NY —> Moscow, No. 598–599, 2 May 1944 from MAJ shows the deference paid by the Residency to the leadership of the American Communist Party and its analytical ability. The message contains the C.P.'s view of the groups for and against President Roosevelt in the 1944 campaign. Extracts from the message:

**We are transmitting information written down by RULEVOJ [C.P. Chairman Browder] after a conversation with ECHO [Bernard Schuster].**

**1. As regards the re-election of ROOSEVELT financial and business groups are on the whole non-committal. They openly support DEWEY much more than any other candidate and support ROOSEVELT very little. On the whole these circles leave the question open refraining from judgment. Such sharp propaganda of hate toward ROOSEVELT, as came out earlier in these circles, is no longer being carried on;**

**********

**TOBIN who is strongly influenced by the Church is at present leading the movement for ROOSEVELT in the circles of the [American Federation of Labor: A.F.L.]. The new Catholic group headed by Supreme Court Justice MURPHY is becoming very active, striving for public support of ROOSEVELT and preparing to campaign for him openly, is widely attracting prominent Catholics. Among the Republicans who were former WILKIE supporters there is a growing tendency toward going over to the side of ROOSEVELT.**

**The strategy of the Republicans still has not clearly been defined.**

**********

**Opposition to ROOSEVELT in Congress is sabotaging all ROOSEVELT's undertakings, with the exception of direct military appropriations. However, the Democrats who stand in opposition to ROOSEVELT consider it impossible to remain in an anti-ROOSEVELT coalition during ....**

**********

**[Polish Americans support Roosevelt]. The Italian Social–Democrats together with former Fascists in every way possible are trying to turn the Italian–Americans against ROOSEVELT An overwhelming majority of the [Yugoslav–Americans] are for**

[28] BEAR = unidentified covermame, but doubtless a leading figure in the Republican Party as the KGB coverterm for the Republican Party = BEAR CUBS.

**ROOSEVELT, even supporters of the mass organizations which are officially being led by supporters of MIhAJLOVICh.[29] The majority will come out for ROOSEVELT.**

**********

**6. If the elections were to take place at the present time ROOSEVELT would probably receive an insignificant majority of the popular vote, but he would lose the election since the votes in his favor are strongly concentrated in the South, where the huge majority of votes on his behalf in the final total count no more than 51%. For the last two months ROOSEVELT has been gaining speed ..... only a favorable course of the war and some bold efforts of ROOSEVELT toward a more clear-cut definition of his policy before the masses could secure his re-election.**

**7. According to our speculations a second front will be launched during the next few weeks.[30] A further delay would actually assure the accession to power of the Republicans.**

In NY —> Moscow, No. 744,746, MAJ advised VIKTOR that KGB agent Laurence Duggan (covername FRENK) an official of the State Department, had talked with Vice-President Wallace, about a matter that was largely unknown to the American public:

**They are afraid for KAPITAN's health — after more than a month's leave he has once more gone on leave.**

Duggan also reported to the KGB that Vice-President Wallace told him that he (Wallace) would be nominated again for that position. Senator Truman, however, replaced him. After Truman became President, SERGEJ, the sub or acting Resident, sent a message to VIKTOR giving his analysis of the new administration. He based his comments on information from some KGB sources, but largely on his own reading of the newspapers and his press contacts (his cover was as chief TASS representative in the U.S.). Some extracts follow from this very long message, NY —> Moscow, Nos. 781–787, 25 and 26 May 1945, to VIKTOR with a copy to the 8th Department. MATROS (SAILOR) = President Harry Truman.

**As a result of MATROS's accession to power, a considerable change in the foreign policy of the [United States] should be expected, first and foremost in relation to the USSR (see our no. 350) [not available]..... an organized campaign to 'get hold of' MATROS and bring about a change in the policy of the COUNTRY towards the USSR. This campaign was reflected in the first instance in the most reactionary section of the press, which has welcomed MATROS's accession to power, emphasizing particularly that henceforth the foreign policy of the [U.S.] will be decided, not independently by MATROS as it was in KAPITAN's day, but jointly with the influential members of the Senate and House of Representatives (including people hostile to us) .... MATROS is maintaining friendly relations in the Senate, not only with the Democrats, but also with the Republicans including such extreme reactionaries as TAFT, WHEELER .... The reactionaries are setting particular hopes on the possibility of getting direction of the [U.S.] foreign policy wholly into their own hands, partly because MATROS is notoriously untried and ill-informed on these matters**

[29] General Mihajlovich — leader of the Serb guerrilla faction that represented the royal government in exile. Opposed to Tito's group.

[30] The Normandy landing took place about 4 weeks later, on 6 June 1944.

**********

**The leading protagonists of this campaign and its instigators are representatives of the [State Department], the Army and the Navy [7 Groups unrecovered] after KAPITAN's death and the end of the war in EUROPE.[31]**

**In newspaper circles in [San Francisco and Washington] it is common knowledge, as has been confirmed to me on separate [1 group unrecovered] by ShMEL, RIChARD, ShEF, [and others][32] that the representatives of the BANK [State Dept.], GREW, DUNN, HOLMES**

**[33 groups unrecoverable]**

**VANDENBERG, EATON, CONALLY, BLOOM, Admirals KING and LEAHY and Generals SOMERVELL and MARSHALL are carrying on a systematic anti-Soviet campaign ....**

**********

**The sources enumerated above said that one of the bitterest anti-Soviet propagandists is KAPITALIST [W. Averill Harriman] .... In private conversations with [C% KAPITALIST] does not shrink from any chicanery. Thus for example one of his latest ....fabrications was that our delegation allegedly threatened to walk out of the Conference if our proposal about the chairmanship was not accepted.**

**I read the newspapers during the long journey[33] and, in so doing, read mainly about questions of foreign policy. In all these international affairs MATROS pays great heed to the advice of the above-mentioned representatives of the BANK, the Army and the Navy. BARNES and ShMEL in talking with me forecast that one should expect an even greater intensification of the press campaign [9 groups unrecovered] the campaign are at present pursuing a double aim: to get MATROS firmly into their clutches and at the same time to obtain**

**[22 groups unrecovered]**

**********

**In a recent conversation with me, the Director of the Institute of Pacific Affairs, CARTER, in the main confirmed RIChARD's statements about the [U.S.] policy in CHINA (which have been reported to you.**

**ShMEL and BARNES have expressed serious alarm at the anti-Soviet atmosphere which has arisen in the [U.S.] and were extremely indignant at what MATROS had said .... [and Secretary of State Stettinius's comments were] described by ShMEL as 'disgusting servility towards EDEN'.**

---

[31] 38 preceding groups are missing, but it's likely this passage concerns anti-Soviet strategies.

[32] ShMEL (BUMBLEBEE) = Walter Lippmann; RIChARD = sometime covername for KGB agent Harry Dexter White — here this could be White or an unidentified journalist who also had that covername. I believe it is White; ShEF = u/i covername.

[33] SERGEJ had returned to New York by train from the UN Conference in San Francisco.

[hundreds of groups later, many of them unrecovered, the message closes with these fragments: "Today a report was published that MATROS has sent to the USSR his personal representative HOPKINS" and later "DAVIES trip to SIDON [Moscow].[34]

H. More References to High Level Penetrations and Connections

The messages in this section give more examples of KGB assets with access to high level information and important people. Once again Charles Kramer and Laurence Duggan are shown to be in the thick of these espionage operations.

NY —> Moscow, No. 1015, to VIKTOR contains three internal messages, the second and third quoted below. Covername LOT (PLUMB) is probably Charles Kramer whose reporting on Congressional and Democratic Party matters was discussed earlier in this chapter. REJDER (RAIDER) = KGB net controller Victor Perlo. FRENK = Laurence Duggan:

> **FRENK will resign from the BANK allegedly 'for personal reasons'. Details and prospects for the future are being looked into.[35]**
>
> **LOT advises that at KAPITAN's direction the Department of Justice [4 groups unrecovered] a number of secret documents concerning the activities of [2 groups unrecovered] representatives of corporations and their connections with German cartels**
>
> [the message then mentions some famous corporate names such as Ford, Du Pont, North American Aviation and others also an influential person, name withheld, described as 'a supporter of FIST [Dewey]'.

NY —> Moscow, No. 1613, 18 November 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR concerns the illegal ALBERT and his handling of Laurence Duggan, known in this message as covername KNYaZ (PRINCE), who also had the covernames FRENK and SHERVUD (SHERWOOD). The message shows Duggan's excellent connections, most importantly to Vice President Wallace (then a lame duck however, as he had been dropped from the Democratic ticket by FDR and replaced by Harry Truman):

> **In mid–October ALBERT tried to get in touch with KNYaZ. The latter's wife stated that KNYaZ had left for the PROVINCES [Latin America] and would return after Christmas. At one time KNYaZ was compelled to resign because of the dismissal of LUN's former deputy on the grounds of organizational and political disagreement.[36]**
>
> **As a result of the election, LUN's [SecState Cordell Hull's] dismissal and the appointment of LOTsMAN [Henry Wallace] in his place are not ruled out. Inasmuch as KNYaZ is friendly with LOTsMAN [1 group unrecovered] he could count on a leading post in the BANK [State].**
>
> **About five months ago, having proposed to ALBERT the suspension of meetings with KNYaZ, you promised to give, subsequently, instructions on how ALBERT would explain**

[34] I cite these two fragments because the first shows a typical truename reference in KGB traffic to Harry Hopkins and the second mentions Soviet dupe Joseph E. Davies, sometime U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, who unaccountably still had a reputation as an expert on Stalin and Russia (he, like Vice-President Henry Wallace, visited Soviet slave labor death camps and compared them to the American pioneer settlements full of the spirit of adventure etc.)

[35] The reference is to the departure of FRENK's patron, Sumner Welles because of the homosexual scandals involving the latter.

[36] That is, Duggan left the State Department when Sumner Welles departed.

**the break to KNYaZ. ALBERT considers that a complicated explanation is not necessary as KNYaZ knew of ALBERT's chronic illness and himself recommended the latter go away to the COUNTRYSIDE or to ARIZONA for a few months**

**[34 groups unrecoverable]**

**use:**

**1. If LOTsMAN gets an interesting post it goes without saying that KNYaZ must 'get in on it' by using his friendship.**

**2. If not, then we can try notwithstanding to use KNYaZ's proximity to LOTsMAN to fix him up in a suitable establishment, still extracting, via him, interesting information which will [c% in any case] come LOTsMAN's way; or to send him to MI or to some other place in the PROVINCES, using the cover of representative of a firm (according to ALBERT the PROVINCIAL experience of KNYaZ allows him to count on any such appointment), and there to use him as the head of a private office (instead of or with ChEKh).**[37]

**If you agree I shall brief ALBERT in this spirit.**

**We consider that KNYaZ should be turned over to VADIM only after ALBERT has ascertained his prospects.**[38]

NY —> Moscow, No. 1352, 23 September 1944, to VIKTOR is multiple subject, one of which is partially quoted below. In this part no source is given for the information — it could be Harry White or the army of spies in Treasury/Foreign Economic Administration, or one of the State Department assets:

**Two or three weeks ago KAPITAN appointed a committee composed of [Secretary of State Cordell Hull; Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson; Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau Jr.] to study the problems of post-war Germany. There was no official statement about this but**

[most of the remainder unrecovered except for several phrases such as, "in each large ministry there is a special committee"; "committee of the [State Dept] to study post-war problems of Europe consists of [Cordell Hull and Myron Taylor]"

NY —> Moscow, No. 750, 26 May 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR concerns an atypical KGB agent, at least in the U.S. — an international rascal, working for various countries and ideologies (all of which might have given good cover for his true allegiance — I do not know when he became a KGB man). In this message covername OSIPOV = Nicholas Wladimirovich Orloff, a former Czarist officer who entered the U.S. in 1940, and became a citizen on 9 March 1944 in NYC. Between 1917–1939 his career included military service with the Germans, Bolsheviks and Whites, English language propaganda broadcaster for the Nazis, honorary member of the SS. He had come to the U.S. from Yugoslavia. The message is interesting because of his claimed or actual high-level connections in U.S. politics and society.

[37] Coverterm MI = Chile; covemame ChEKh = Robert Owen Menaker, veteran KGB agent working the anti-Trokskyite beat in the U.S. and Latin America. Henry Wallace, dropped as Vice President, did not replace Cordell Hull as Secretary of State (that went to Stettinius). Duggan stayed with the UNRRA as legal advisor into 1946 and then replaced his father as head of an educational institute. He killed himself on 20 December 1948, following discussions with the FBI. He had been a KGB agent since 1936, having been recruited by veteran officer Hede Massing.

[38] VADIM = Gromov, the Resident in Washington. I do not understand this qualifier or the earlier reference to ALBERT having dropped contact with Duggan for a time. Possibly all this concerns operational security measures: obviously Duggan was and had been a valuable agent.

*XVII. THE WHITE HOUSE*

> **In connection with OSIPOV's acquiring U.S. citizenship we advise: OSIPOV will endeavor to get through his connections in [Washington] (Senator GUFFEY, Princess KANTAKUZINA — [who is] GRANT's granddaughter, EARLE) a position in the BANK [State Dept]. His knowledge of languages and the countries of EUROPE will help him to consolidate himself there and in time to arrange for himself an interesting spot. In a conversation on these matters O. declared that first of all it behooved him to declare to his wife that he had broken with us, for she is a great patriot of the [U.S.] and his working at the BANK and simultaneous co-operation with us, 'she might look upon as contradictory'. If from some causes or other a placement in the BANK should not work out, he will try to get in IZBA [the OSS]. In case he cannot enter government service he will secure an appointment with a firm [32 groups unrecovered] to the PROVINCE [Latin America]. O. again adverted to the question of his taking our citizenship, irrespective of [d% the fact that] he has acquired U.S. citizenship. Telegraph instructions.**

The Princess Kantakuzina mentioned in the message was Julia Dent Grant, grand-daughter of President Grant. She had married Czarist Major General Prince Grigorij L'vovich Kantakuzina who also had the title Count Speranskij. Orloff did not get a job with State or the OSS, but after the war he became a senior translator-interpreter with the UN.[39]

NY —> Moscow, No. 1033, 1 July 1943, no address or signature found (but definitely signed by MAKSIM)[40] must be the strangest KGB message in the US<—> Moscow Venona material. Quoting the second paragraph:

> **A Secretary of the Embassy, OREKhOV, KOM..., and their wives were invited to a supper at the Governor of LOUISIANA's, who is not badly disposed towards us and is being studied by us. *Since he asked me to come* [4 groups unrecovered], then I in order to go over to**
>
> **[22 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **'intelligent people – he [7 groups unrecovered] – BLACK**
>
> **[32 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **after supper when**
>
> [most of remainder of message unreadable — but it probably concerns the matter discussed in the footnote]

MAKSIM's phrase that the Governor "is being studied by us" means that he was being assessed for recruitment. The Governor of Louisiana at the time was Sam Houston Jones. Perhaps he had visited Washington at this time and invited some Embassy staffers to dinner — though the FBI could find no record of this. Coming from the tradition of Huey Long's Populism, Governor Jones might have made remarks about economic and social reform, which the KGB have interpreted in light of Marxist doctrine.

[39] Orloff was questioned by the FBI and at least one other KGB agent was questioned about him. He might have been a good candidate for doubling but the records I have seen do not show this was done.

[40] This is one of the messages that concerns MAKSIM's past and the opening sentence confirms that it came from him: "The real reasons for the surveillance of me, I think, have been accurately ascertained — the COMPETITORS have found out about my having been at KOZIELSK", i.e. the Katyn Massacres.

# XVIII. KGB SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN THE U.S. AND MEXICO

## A. Introduction

This chapter presents some of the Venona messages about KGB undertakings in the category of Special Operations, by which I mean covert or clandestine activities other than straight espionage. However, I will also use this chapter for other types of Mexico City <—> Moscow Venona messages, especially some items on illegals. Unlike most of the case studies, in this chapter the KGB will not look so competent or so lucky: they cannot even get their man out of a corrupt prison system run by a corrupt government sympathetic to the Soviet Union and always amenable to a bribe; nor can they get him killed, which might also have been their goal. Likewise they cannot kill or capture a defector in New York in spite of placing agents in his presence and confidence. At least one of their senior officers in Mexico City is accused of going native and just enjoying the easy-going life of the country.

## B. The KOMAR/GNAT Affair : KGB NY Looks for a Defector

Victor Kravchenko, a Soviet citizen assigned to the Soviet Government Purchasing Commission (SGPC) in Washington D.C. defected on the night of 1 April 1944. He went into hiding in New York City, and on 4 April he issued a statement through the New York Times denouncing the USSR's internal policies and their true attitude toward the United States. He placed himself "under the protection of American public opinion". Going public in this way may have saved his life, for the KGB soon tracked him down but did not kill him.[1]

The earliest KGB messages concerning the defection have not been found in Venona. However, 16 messages, NY —> Moscow sent between 1 May and 21 September 1944, and one in January 1945, contain the covername for Kravchenko: KOMAR (GNAT). All but one of these messages was sufficiently broken to be published. No Moscow —> NY or Washington <—> Moscow messages on the KOMAR affair have been found (they exist of course but in unmatched and therefore unbreakable traffic).[2]

The published translations sometimes use KOMAR and sometimes GNAT, but I will stick with the former.

### TULIP is Put on the Case

The New York Residency promptly assigned Mark Zborowski, covername TULIP, to the case. Russian–born Zborowski had been educated in Poland and France, entering the U.S. as a permanent resident in December 1941. He had been in contact with the KGB in France since at least 1934. In the U.S. he held various employments and at the time of the KOMAR case was a language consultant to the U.S. Army Service Forces in New York City. The first KOMAR message, NY —> Moscow, No. 594, 1 May 1944, from MAJ is quoted in full:

[1] Kravchenko was born in the Ukraine. He became a C.P. member in 1929, received an engineering degree and worked in the metallurgical industry before the war. He was on active duty with the Red Army in 1941–42, then reverted to civilian status as chief engineer for a number of defense factories in Moscow. He entered the U.S. on 18 Aug 1943, for assignment with the SGPC. Kravchenko was an authentic SGPC expert, unconnected to the GRU or KGB (though often persecuted by the latter during the 1930s, according to his autobiography, I Chose Freedom).

[2] A little study of the traffic could be made to obtain a count of messages and groups (and priorities) during, say, the first week of April 1944 on all lanes. The raw material is held in the traffic boxes of the Venona Collection.

**1. In spite of measures taken TULIP has not so far succeeded in making KOMAR's acquaintance. One cannot insist strongly to [Mr. and Mrs. David Dallin] as this would arouse suspicion.[3]**

**In a day or so TULIP is meeting with DALLIN and ESTRINA [Mrs. Dallin]. The latter promised to have a detailed chat on the KOMAR affair after which the meeting will probably take place.**

**In the last conversation ESTRINA declared that something serious is still expected, but what they are afraid of she did not say. We shall do everything possible to find out what she is talking about and measures have been taken accordingly.**

**2. Comrade PETROV's [Beria's] instructions were put into effect immediately upon receipt. Concerning measures involving the STORE [SGPC] you should report to MAKSIM (particularly in relation to R. and M.) As regards our**

**[25 groups unrecoverable]**

**as [we?] waited for concrete results.**

**L. P. Beria, head of state security under Stalin. The probable covername PETROV in some important KGB messages.**

Paragraph 2. of the message is particularly interesting. Beria [PETROV] himself had sent instructions to New York, though we do not know what they were. It is just possible that the famous May Day (the date of this message) crypto indicator change may relate. And if Lauchlin Currie's information about the U.S. being on the verge of breaking the Soviet diplomatic code had reached the Center, then that information might have been put into the equation (i.e. that Kravchenko could have somehow provided crypto information to the U.S. as an in-place defector: which he wasn't). Note also that MAJ asks the Center to tell the Washington Resident, MAKSIM about measures being taken in New York (?) concerning the SGPC. I do not know the identities of R. and M.; they might have been KGB people inside the SGPC.

[3] Lidyia Estrina (Mrs. David Dallin) and David Dallin were important intellectuals in the Russian emigre community, and they took considerable interest in Kravchenko. David had been a member of a non-communist socialist party in Russia before and during the Revolution. After the war he wrote an important book about the KGB based heavily on KGB archives captured in Smolensk by the Nazis and which later came into U.S. hands.

## OLA Looks for KOMAR

More KGB assets joined in the search for KOMAR. In a message of 2 May, No. 600, which MAJ sent directly to PETROV (Beria), New York reported (most groups missing; I have abbreviated the translation):

> **GREEN has reported the following preliminary data about KOMAR [all missing, rlb] ..... SHAPLIN.**
>
> **..... [of the GRU here in NYC] and was registered as Captain Walter JOHNSON. At present his address is unknown. It has been established that SHAPLIN knows where KOMAR is. LYONS .... asserts that GNAT is going to apply to the BANK [State Dept.] for ....**
>
> **.... Andrej VISSON of Russian or Ukrainian extraction. Processing through GREEN is [d% unreliable].**

GREEN may be an unidentified covername, or as likely an American involved in C.P. front activities (per footnotes to one of the translations). The reference to the GRU amd Captain Walter Johnson are not understood; truenames VISSON and SHAPLIN were members of the Russian exile community in New York. LYONS is unidentified.

• NY —> Moscow, Nos. 613–614, 3 May 1944, MAJ to PETROV introduces covername OLA – Christina Krotkova – and U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Aleksej Stupenkov (discussed in Chapter XVI). Krotkova, who later denied being involved in any activity on behalf of the KGB, was found in Venona 6 times as covername OLA and 3 times as ZhANNA (Jean). Russian-born, she came to the U.S. in 1939 and became a citizen in 1945. She worked for a Russian language newspaper in NYC from 1940–43, and at the time of the KOMAR case was with the Office of War Information in New York City (home to several KGB agents); from 1946 into the 1950s she worked for the UN as a Russian translator. The message:

> **1. On our behalf under a plausible pretext OLA visited CARTHAGE [Washington DC], and met a fascist acquaintance of whom you know, STUPENKOV (works at present guarding buildings of the [Navy Department]) who, when he had drunk quite a bit, told her the following: He had to do with the desertion of KOMAR, whom he had met four times, had got him drunk, and had carried on 'heart-to-heart talks'. KOMAR said he had acted from 'ideological' considerations, 'he was fed up with what he had seen over the span of 20 years'. At the same time STUPENKOV acknowledged that a no less powerful motive was the desire of an easy, comfortable life and did not deny that this was just what had produced on KOMAR a profound impression. STUPENKOV helped KOMAR to make contact with the [Americans]. For this he met him in a club for military personnel located in the same building as the 'Associated Press', conducted KOMAR to the doors of that agency, which at once got into contact with SHAPLIN. Thereafter SHAPLIN took the affair of KOMAR into his own hands and KOMAR went to [NYC]. By what STUPENKOV said, SHAPLIN knows KOMAR's whereabouts and continues to maintain contact with the latter. KOMAR has been declaring that he does not doubt that 'they will liquidate' him. He has been trying to inflate the importance of what he has to tell and thus enable himself to have a quiet and comfortable life in the PERIPHERY [u/i location] or the PROVINCES [Latin America]. The letter to the [NY] 'Times' was written by SHAPLIN. The affair simmered down because the [U.S. Government] did not [d% want]**

**[31 groups unrecoverable]**

[summary of next two paragraphs, rlb: STUPENKOV had been meeting regularly, though not necessarily secretly, with Nikolaj Skryagin, the Soviet Assistant Naval Attache (thus, GRU–naval) and the latter was trying to use him to influence the editor of an anti-communist Russian language newspaper in NYC. It turned out that Sergeant STUPENKOV also wrote for that paper and was himself anti-communist (OLA, secretly KGB, also had worked for this paper: thus her connection to S.). STUPENKOV had first met KOMAR at a gathering at the assistant naval attache's apartment]

**Recently they summoned STUPENKOV to the KhATA [FBI] and interrogated him about OSA and her husband, a member of ZhAROV's chorus, ALEKSEEV[4] .....**

[summary by rlb: covernames OSA, KAVALERIST (KGB agent Sergej Kurnakov) and OSIPOV appear at the end of this sentence. OSIPOV = Prince Nikolaj V. Orlov (Orloff), a KGB agent with friends in high places — see the preceeding chapter. The meaning is uncertain.].

**2. In [Washington] OLA made the acquaintance of an American woman C. [name withheld, rlb] of the well-known [name withheld] family. The latter works on the secret reception of foreign radio transmissions including those from the USSR. The receptions of transmissions from the USSR is the business of 5–6 people, all TOWNSMEN (Americans). There are no Russians. C. is friendly with STUPENKOV. The Soviet citizen LOMONOSOV lives in her house. STUPENKOV sticks [summary by rlb: copies of an anti-communist newspaper into L.'s mailbox].**

**On a recent occasion OLA became acquainted with SHAPLIN. She has been given the task of cautiously endeavouring to enter into closer relations with the latter, verifying what STUPENKOV says, and, if the opportunity presents itself, finding out more detailed information about the KOMAR affair. OLA is well acquainted with ESTRINA [Mrs. David Dallin] .... as a result of OLA's joining the [Office of War Information] they have not met for a long time, but when the occasion offers, OLA may be able to resume their old acquaintance. We think OLA should arrange to associate with ESTRINA and SHAPLIN.**

The essence of this message is that OLA was attempting to locate KOMAR through her contacts in the expatriate Russian community. I do not know the accuracy of STUPENKOV's information concerning his connection to KOMAR, though some of what he reportedly said seems likely. Mrs. C. was merely a marginal unwitting source for possible access to the Russian community, of further interest because of her family connections and her war work. The latter ("the reception of transmissions from the USSR") involved her work with the FBIS predecessor, that is, she worked on open Russian state radio broadcasts, not encrypted communications.

NY —> Moscow, No. 654, 9 May 1944, MAJ to PETROV, contains a brief report from OLA who had identified more Russian expatriates in contact with KOMAR. KERENSKIJ = Aleksandr KERENSKIJ, former head of the Provisional (non-communist) government of Russia after the 1917 Revolution. He lived in the U.S. for many years, a professor at a Midwestern college. The message:

[4] OSA (WASP) would later be the covername for Ruth Greenglass. In this message it must have been the covername for Lyudmilla Nikolaevna Alekseeva, the wife of Don Cossack chorus member P.I. Alekseev. Serge Jaroff (ZhAROV in the message) headed that famous singing group.

**Your number 195 [not available]. OLA has reported that KOMAR is living out of town. He sometimes comes into [NYC]. SHAPLIN and KERENSKIJ's right-hand man, ZENZINOV, often go to see him. The latter told [OLA] that KOMAR had used SHAPLIN**

**[25 groups unrecovered]**

**that the latter may introduce her to KOMAR.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 724, 19 May 1944, address and signature not recovered, continues the story of OLA's search for KOMAR through the expatriate community. ZENZINOV = Vladimir Zenzinov, described in the preceeding message as Kerenskij's right-hand man:

**ZENZINOV has told OLA: KOMAR decided on his steps after agonizing hesitations. He has lost everything and won nothing. He is in a depressed state. He is in fear for his life. At the end of May KOMAR's first article will be published in the magazine 'Cosmopolitan'. ZENZINOV is supposed not to be meeting KOMAR on considerations of security. He maintains constant contact with KOMAR through another person (he did not mention the surname). KOMAR is being guarded by two men. According to what ZENZINOV said the guard is not reliable. KOMAR's 'friends' including ZENZINOV think**

**[up to 93 groups not recovered]**

GREEN, TULIP, MARS and Others Look for KOMAR

• NY —> Moscow, No. 694, 16 May 1944, from MAJ, address not found mentions a number of sources who had information on KOMAR. HALPERIN = Alexander Halpern, head of the Minorities Section of the British Secret Service station in New York (cover designator BSC: British Security Coordination. See chapter XVI.) GREEN = a u/i covername, or the truename of a person with C.P. connections:

**SERGEJ met VISSON on the cover line.[5] VISSON formerly worked at a radio station, and is now an adviser on foreign political questions of the magazine 'Reader's Digest'. He knows HALPERIN well. VISSON on his own initiative repeated information about KOMAR received from GREEN. He stated that KOMAR is one of several members of our colony whom [the Poles?] intend to use for their own purposes. In all probability, this information was received from HALPERIN, who he recommended SERGEJ to get to know, emphasizing that HALPERN is specially occupied with questions relating to national minorities in the [U.S.], including POLES, UKRAINIANS and others.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 726, 20 May 1944, MAJ to PETROV. Covername MARS = KGB agent Vasilij Sukhomlin of the Czech Information Service in NYC:

**According to word from MARS, KOMAR is living in KERENSKIJ's cottage in Connecticut. The details are being ascertained.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 740, 24 May 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR contains some particularly intriguing information. KGB agent TULIP (Mark Zborowski), David Dallin and his wife (or future wife) ESTRINA re-appear in this message. DON–LEVIN = Isaac Don Levine, a famous journalist often involved in

[5] "on the cover line' means the SERGEJ, the TASS representative in New York represented himself as just that when meeting with VISSON. SERGEJ was the KGB sub-Resident.

investigations of KGB and GRU activities in the U.S. Whittaker Chambers went to Levine in 1939 with his story about the Hiss et al GRU net, and Levine took him to A.A. Berle, a senior State Department official (who took good notes, but did nothing for about 5 years). The message:

> **TULIP has informed us: ESTRINA often sees KOMAR, who is dictating his book to her. DALLIN and DON–LEVIN are advisors to him. So far the biographical part of the book has been composed. KOMAR is hurrying with the book, being afraid that he may not manage to finish it. KOMAR was a member of the BUKhARIN opposition, but the book will not say so.[6] KOMAR's family with the exception of his wife was always anti-soviet in temper. KOMAR is well informed about the KRIVITsKIJ case.**

KRIVITsKIJ = Colonel Walter Krivitsy of the GRU and later KGB who defected in the late 1930s and was found shot dead in a Washington D.C. hotel in 1941. While it is not clear why KOMAR would have any inside information on the Krivitsky case, it must mean that he had told Dallin, Estrina or Isaac Don Levine information about the case that accorded with the facts: "KOMAR is well informed about the KRIVITsKIJ case". He makes no mention of the case in his book, I Chose Freedom, so what needs to be learned is just what he said to that trio, and/or the FBI, in April–May 1944. In this message the KGB is confirming the truth of whatever he said.

NY —> Moscow, No. 799, 3 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR is a short, partially recovered message about articles KOMAR had written:

> **According to ESTRINA's information KOMAR**
>
> **[15 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **TULIP. ESTRINA [3 groups unrecovered] TULIP with KOMAR. KOMAR has written articles [4 groups unrecovered] LEND LEASE going to the USSR.' [also] 'Conversations with Soviet Dignitaries' (in the form of a dialogue). The articles have not yet been published.**

TULIP Finds KOMAR

- NY —> Moscow, No. 907, 26 June 1944, MAJ to PETROV.[7] The information in this message would have sealed the fate of one of KOMAR's old friends back in the Soviet Union (of course KOMAR and his friends did not know that his new confidante, TULIP, was a KGB agent):

> **On 24th June TULIP made the acquaintance of KOMAR in the DALLIN–ESTRINA flat. From 9 p.m. to 12 p.m. approximately [they passed the time talking in Dallin's flat]. From 12 to 4 a.m. in TULIP's flat. The conversation brought the following to light:**
>
> **1. In the winter of 1944 KOMAR was directed to ESTRINA by a citizen of ours working in our institution in [Washington].[8] This fellow**
>
> **[12 groups unrecovered]**

[6] Bukharin, one of Lenin's cronies, was shot during the great purges of the 1930s. KOMAR was caught up in the purges on the usual trumped up charges but was released after a short time in prison.

[7] Note that after addressing his early messages to Beria [PETROV], MAJ had gone back to addressing his messages to his regular boss, and Beria's subordinate, Lt. Gen. Fitin (VIKTOR). This message is especially important, so it goes to Beria again.

[8] The translator noted that the reference here was likely to some part of the Soviet mission in the U.S. other than the KGB.

**did [d% not] name.**

**2. A close friend of KOMAR's in the USSR, Konstantin Mikhajlovich (K. did not mention his surname), was arrested in 1936 after his arrival from the [U.S.] by order of the head of the ChELYaBINSK Directorate, Kolbin. In 1938 Konstantin Mikhajlovich was set free and on arrival in [Moscow] met KOMAR at the Hotel Metropole. Before KOMAR's departure for the [U.S.] this Konstantin Mikhajlovich gave him instructions on how to work against the USSR. Recently KOMAR is supposed to have learnt from the papers that Konstantin Mikhajlovich has been awarded a STALIN Prize for metallurgy. KOMAR emphasized that Konstantin Mikhajlovich was an out and out enemy of the Soviet State.**[9]

**3. KOMAR began to share the views of the BUKhARIN opposition in 1932 in ChELYaBINSK.**

**4. KOMAR's first two articles will be published in the near future in the magazine 'COSMOPOLITAN'. K. will get 4000 American dollars for the articles.**

**5. For his first book K. will get 9000 dollars from the publishers**

**[33 groups unrecovered]**

**whether ADAM's [u/i] candidacy**

**[23 groups unrecovered]**

• In NY —> Moscow, No. 951, 4 July 1944, from MAJ (no address), the Residency attempts to clarify some of TULIP's information:

**The person that sent KOMAR to ESTRINA and that is working in our establishments in [Washington] was acquainted in BERLIN with ESTRINA, and not with KOMAR. Evidently our telegram was worded imprecisely.**[10]

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1143–1144, 10 August 1944, to VIKTOR, mostly concerns KGB special operations in Mexico and will be quoted in the next section. The last sentence of the message says that : "At present TULIP is being used by us on the KOMAR case and is carrying out the task very DILIGENTLY."

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1145, 10 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, contains reports from both TULIP and OLA, the latter even gives KOMAR's address in NYC. Note the references to author-journalists Isaac Don Levine, Max Eastman and Louis Fischer. Indeed Kravchenko's best protection was his association (though rocky) with these influential writers and with the Dallins.[11] The message:

**KOMAR told TULIP that he had a friend in our firm, KARLOV, through whom he found out that his mistress NINA (he did not mention the surname), whose father and husband**

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[9] In his book, Kravchenko/KOMAR described a meeting just before his departure, with a man who had been tortured by the KGB during the purges and who hated the Soviet regime. He provided no details of the man's trade or residence etc., but he was probably Konstantin Mikhajlovich.

[10] The Center had probably telegraphed NY that KOMAR had never been in Berlin. The person in question was Sarah–Sonia Judey, an employee of the SGPC in Washington. KOMAR was with her the night before he defected which was when in got in touch with David Dallin. Dallin, of course, was the key figure in the Kravchenko defection and the aftermath. Like Isaac Don Levine, he was a great enemy of the Soviet regime.

[11] No small matter in the intellectual climate of the times. The Communist paper Daily Worker openly urged, in specialized Soviet language of course, the murder of Kravchenko. I have not looked at FBI records of the Kravchenko matter so do not know what protection he might have been given by or through the Bureau.

**had been arrested, was an [agent] of ours.[12] After KOMAR's first article in 'Cosmopolitan' KOMAR broke with LEVIN [Isaac Don Levine] because the latter signed the article as co-author. LEVIN in reply to this accused KOMAR of commercialism and pettiness and said that the latter [3 groups unrecovered] questions of money and that he was duty bound as a citizen of the [U.S.] to keep an eye on the behaviour of a type like KOMAR and the latter still had to give proof of his sincerity to the government of the [U.S.]. At this point KOMAR decided to take [24 groups unrecoverable] Max EASTMAN.**

**In a conversation with a certain Nadezhda Ivanova MEDVEDEVA, OLA discovered that KOMAR is living at the address 209 West 97th Street.**

**ZENZINOV told OLA: KOMAR's book would be ready in a month's time. KOMAR's first wife was said to have worked with us since she was threatened that her first husband — an agricultural expert, who had been accused of being a saboteur, — would be persecuted. In [Moscow] KOMAR began living with his second wife who also was said to have worked with us [and] to have been in ISTANBUL, in PARIS, in ITALY and in SWITZERLAND. In [Washington] KOMAR is said to have received a letter from her saying that the parents he had left behind had died and that she wanted to give up her work.**

**2. ESTRINA told TULIP [24 groups unrecoverable] Louis FISCHER. Details are being obtained.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1202, 23 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR contains the interesting information that the State Department believed the KOMAR defection was not authentic. KGB source THRUSH (DROZD) = unidentified covername, later known as AKhMED:

**THRUSH advises:**

**The KhATA [FBI] is supposed to have established that KOMAR is meeting secretly with a number of workers of the TRUST [Soviet Embassy] and the STORE [SGPC]. In the BANK [State Dept] there is supposed to exist the conviction that the business with KOMAR is a put-up job (with a special purpose). We will try to check this information and as far as possible get to know the facts.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 87, 19 January 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR is the last KOMAR message found in Venona — very little 1945 traffic is readable. In this message Mark Zborowski, formerly known as TULIP has the new covername KANT. Christina Krotkova, formerly covername OLA, is ZhANNA (Jean):

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

**ZENZINOV**

**[18 groups unrecovered]**

**DALLIN and allegedly KERENSKIJ**

**[21 groups unrecoverable]**

**the last three weeks KOMAR and DALLIN have been in a great panic. KOMAR has noticed that he is being intensively shadowed; moreover he and D. have received warnings by telephone from some persons or other that [Washington] is preparing to hand KOMAR**

[12] I'm not sure who is being discussed : NINA was KOMAR's mistress — and a KGB agent? Neither KARLOV nor NINA are identified.

**over to the [Soviet Government]. KOMAR is alarmed by the incessant shadowing and is said to be hiring two bodyguards. D. says that he supposes that it is the 'GPU' which is having KOMAR shadowed, preparing to do away with him.**

**The work on KOMAR is being carried out by KANT and ZhANNA. KANT is acquainted with KOMAR personally, but for the most part gets his information through a neighbor. ZhANNA takes part in reading[s] at Z.'s [presumably Zenzinov's] and from him gets information about KOMAR.**

**KANT has been instructed to develop his acquaintance with KOMAR to the point of friendship.**

Later Years of the Kravchenko Case

During 1945, KGB agent Christina Krotkova (OLA/ZhANNA) became KOMAR/Kravchenko's typist and translator. Kravchenko believed that a number of attempts on his life were made over the years, and on 25 February 1966, he was found shot dead in his small Manhattan apartment, a single bullet wound in his head and a .38 revolver in his pocket. The death was ruled a suicide though the placement of the death weapon seemed odd. Kravchenko had reported 4 attempts on his life in 1949 and in 1956 he said that he shot and wounded an intruder who got away. His friends accepted that his death was a suicide, because one of them had seen him only minutes before the fatal shot and thought he would have seen anyone else entering or leaving the apartment. Probably true but the case has an eerie resemblance to that of Krivitsky.

C. The RITA/GNOME Case: The KGB Tries to Spring Trotsky's Assassin from a Mexican Prison

**RITA/GNOME: He murdered Trotsky.**

On 20 August 1940, a KGB agent using a Canadian passport in the name of Frank Jacson, fatally wounded Leon Trotsky in Mexico City. This was the culmination of a long KGB special operation headed by General Leonid Eitingon.[13]

In 1943, the KGB undertook an operation to get Frank Jacson out of a Mexican prison (and along the way, keep an eye on Trotsky's widow and her late husband's papers). Through informants in Mexico and the

[13] Earlier efforts on Trotsky's life had included a machine gun attack on his house by a probable KGB "Combat Group" and the kidnapping and murder of one of his bodyguards.

discovery of secret writing in letters screened under the wartime censorship program, the FBI learned that this operation was in progress. The activation of clandestine radio transmitters, using the same cipher system (books) as the secret writing in the intercepted letters, provided additional information. Though exploited long after the event, Venona provided considerable inside information on the KGB's plans, concept of operations and personalities — some of this, even at a late date, helped the Bureau and CIA in their counterintelligence operations.

The KGB used covernames RITA and GNOME in referrring to Frank Jacson and the operation to get him out of prison, though, as we will see, they also used additional coverterms for specific parts of the operation. The earliest exploitable communications on this subject are NY —> Moscow, May–September 1943. Thereafter, most of the relevant communications went directly Mexico City <—> Moscow.

Some prelimary words on the KGB people involved in the operation. Trotsky's murderer, the so-called Frank Jacson, also had the aliases Jacques Mornard and Jacques Mornard Vandenreschd. His true name was Ramon Mercader, born in Barcelona in 1913. His mother Cardidad Mercador, a Cuban-born Spaniard, became active in Communist Party matters in the 1920s. By the 1930s she was KGB, active in Belgium, France and Spain; in the latter she operated under the cover of the socialist and Catalan nationalist parties. She was at the front during the Spanish Civil War of 1936–1939, on the Loyalist–Republican side, and also worked for the KGB–controlled SIM, the Republican secret police organization. She brought her son Ramon, then commanding a Republican military unit, into the KGB (by 1937). In later years (probably after the murder of Trotsky) she was supposedly considered a "sacred" person by KGB, reporting directly to Beria and thus avoiding the fate of most KGB and GRU veterans who had been in the Spanish Civil War.

The KGB came to control the Republican Army and government during the Spanish Civil War. The KGB also ran arms shipments into Spain and, undoubtedly as payment for same, stole the Spanish government's gold reserves. Most Americans who fought in Spain served in the KGB–controlled International Brigades, especially in the Lincoln and Washington Battalions.[14] A number of KGB agents prominent in Venona traffic were in Spain, including TULIP (Mark Zbrosky) and STUKACH (Jack Katz); and RITA/GNOME (Frank Jacson), his mother KLAVA (Caridad Mercador), and TOM (General Leonid Eitingon), the chief of this special operation. Eitingon, who was Caridad Mercador's lover, organized guerrilla operations in Spain. So, the Spanish Civil War was a valuable training ground for those KGB and GRU people who survived, and a place to recruit young idealists and Communists who flocked to the anti–Fascist cause. The KGB didn't miss any bets however — they took the passports of all American volunteers in Spain, undoubtedly counting on many

[14] The Lincoln Battalion is often called the Lincoln Brigade. Originally it was a battalion of the 15th International Brigade (the Washington battalion was merged into the Lincoln). About 2500 Americans served in Spain on the Republican side, most of them were probably Communists, and 900 were killed or disappeared. Many of the recruits were Communist college students or teachers from New York. Another large group came out of Western mining, lumberjack and longshoremen groups. Robert Merriman, for example, was from a lumbering community, a graduate of the University of Nevada and a college instructor. He was one of the few Lincolns with prior military training (he held a reserve commission in the U.S. Army). Croatian born KGB agent Steve Nelson, a friend of Merriman, was another Lincoln. He came out of an industrial and trade union background.

MIAs whose passports might be re-usable.[15]

Some Early RITA messages, May–Sep 1943

We have at least four Venona messages, NY —> Moscow from this period, the earliest references to this special operation that I have found in the U.S. traffic. I will summarize the first and third messages and quote extensively from the other two:

1. NY —> Moscow, No. 767, 25 May 1943 involves unusual signature and address covernames. The message is from UCN/12, found but one other time (no. 1112, 9 Jul 43), to ANDREJ. Both are unidentified.[16] Most of the message could not be recovered, the isolated phrases refer to a meeting with LUKA (Pavel Klarin), and to "the RITA project [2 groups unrecovered] [d% provocative acts]". The last phrase of the message was readable and refers to having something (probably weapons) "in order to have them at hand in case of necessity."

2. NY —> Moscow, No. 816, 817, 30 May 1943, address and signature not recovered. HARRY = Jacob Epstein, KGB agent; JUAN = KGB agent Juan Gaytan Godoy, a Mexican murderer and sometime taxi driver and chauffeur. The reference to "hospital" = the prison where Frank Jacson was being held:

**Reference No,. 1545 [not available]**

**At present HARRY's plan consists in getting a postponement of the decision**

**[46 groups unrecovered]**

**[c% the following contents]:**

**(a) he has .... capacity of a consultant at the hospital**

**(b) he has placed a friend of his in the hospital in the role of patient in order to watch the project from within**

**[58 groups unrecoverable; one meaningless phrase not given, rlb]**

**Questions of .... cover, means of conveyance, method of getting across and so forth were decided by [UCN/30] (since he recommended these decisions to HARRY and JUAN).**

[for the rest of the message, about 500 groups are unrecovered; however, the scraps of phrases recovered give some further idea of the importance of the message, for example:]

**LUKA [Pavek Klarin] in this matter according to the instructions of [UCN/30] and the [Center]**

**LUKA has drawn you attention to the fact that the project is ... extremely slowly**

**Transmit all financial**

3. NY —> Moscow, No. 899, 11 June 1943, LUKA to VIKTOR is probably multiple subject. The first paragraph mentions, "the important role of LUKA in [7 groups unrecovered] HARRY (the RITA case), ARTHUR and ALEKSANDR (South America)."

[15] Most KGB/GRU and Red Army and Navy advisors who served in Spain were shot upon return to the Soviet Union, as part of the Great Purge. A number of American volunteers were undoubtedly murdered by the KGB in Spain or later in Russia (that is, some of the members of the Lincoln battalion voluntarily went there at the end of the Civil War and have not been seen since). The case of Robert Merriman, a major in the Lincoln battalion, might prove interesting when KGB archives of the 1930s open. He went MIA at the Battle of the Ebro in 1938, under some suspicious circumstances (he was partly the model for the American SIM officer in Hemingway's, For Whom the Bell Tolls). His KGB friend Steve Nelson might have known more than he told about Merriman's death.

[16] The covername ANDREJ is found in NY no. 1661, 28 November 1944, but probably refers to someone else.

4. NY —> Moscow, No. 1472, 13 September 1943, from LUKA introduces the truename O'ROURKE, who was Walter Rourke aka: Walter Ketley, bodyguard and personal assistant to Trotsky's widow, Natalya Ivanovna Sedova–Trotsky:

> **In the August issue of the POLECATS' [Trotskyites'] magazine 'Fourth International' there was published a long article by O'ROURKE about the history and current situation of the RITA affair which was written in connection with the supposedly expected 5 October [1 group unidentified] [d% appeal]**
>
> **[8groups unrecovered]**
>
> **COUNTRYSIDE [Mexico]**
>
> **[11 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **Advise whether basic excerpts from it should be transmitted by telegraph.**

"The SURGICAL OPERATION is planned by the DOCTORS"

Jacob Epstein, covername HARRY [GARRI in the Russian version] looks like the principal KGB agent on the RITA/GNOME operation, working under control of New York Residency. The sometime NY Resident, Pavel Klarin ((LUKA) was sent to Mexico in late November 1943 to run the whole operation. Epstein, a longtime KGB agent, had worked in the garment trade and related unions in NYC. He went to Spain to serve in the Lincoln Battalion in 1938 later being repatriated on a certificate of identification — the standard means for the surviving Lincolns to get back into the U.S., as the KGB in Spain had collected all their passports. Epstein went to Mexico in January 1941, remaining there on KGB business until August 1944, under commercial cover as the representative of a rug company. In addition to his mentions in Venona, surveillance teams in Mexico City noted Epstein in the company of Klarin 8 times in Feb–April 1944.1[17]

The following three messages from the Mexico City Residency concern an impending operation to get Frank Jacson out of prison — a jail break or more likely an interception while he is enroute to a hearing in court. They are full of tradecraft terminology and internal coverterms:

1. Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 158, 23 December 1943, YURIJ to PETROV. YURIJ = Lev Tarasov, the regular Mexico City Resident; PETROV = Beria; KAPITAN's money = President Roosevelt's money, that is, U.S. currency.

> **Contact has been established by LUKA. The SURGICAL OPERATION is planned by the DOCTORS to take place in four days time. At this stage [1 group unrecovered] by other means is impossible. Without delay transfer 20,000 in KAPITAN's money for urgent requirements. Telegraph your [1 group unrecovered]. [2 groups unrecovered]**

2. Mexico City —> Moscow, Nos. 174–176, 29 December 1943, YURIJ to PETROV. Once again Tarasov addressed Beria himself. The message contains many internal coverterms, which are the phrases appearing here in all-capital letters (an explanation follows in the next message). Frank Jacson's covername has been changed to GNOME (vice RITA):

> **Having arrived in the COUNTRYSIDE [Mexico], LUKA [3 groups unrecovered] attempted TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT with HARRY and JUAN according to the**

[17] The FBI had a large operation in Mexico and South American during World War II, mostly devoted to operations against the German services. The British Secret Service and U.S. Military Intelligence also worked extensively in Latin America during those years.

**RECIPES but this did not yield results. HARRY stated that he had not received a single GIFT. We are busy trying to find an explanation of this state of affairs. AGREEMENT was established after the USING UP of the available ADJUTANTS of HARRY and JUAN, for which purpose use was made of ANTON who passed on our VALUABLE GIFT to HARRY through DON. At about the time of the PRESENTED [5 groups unrecovered] the MIXTURE [1 group unrecovered]. GNOME**

**[62 groups unrecoverable]**

**delaying [1 group unrecovered] MIXTURE [3 groups unrecovered] GNOME will be dissolved from the LABORATORY to the WAREHOUSE by one of nine possible THEORIES. In the future the VESSEL will be**

**[40 groups unrecoverable]**

**was done earlier. By the THEORY [4 groups unrecovered] stop at the planned**

**[70 groups unrecoverable/unrecovered]**

**TEMPERATURE**

**[45 groups unrecovered]**

**On arrival GNOME will**

**[46 groups unrecovered]**

**GNOME's ULTIMATUM. After the ULTIMATUM [6 groups unrecovered] GNOME will be DISSOLVED in SODA [3 groups unrecovered] by the SOIL and delivered**

**[412 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

3. Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 177–179, 006, 30 December 1943, and 3 January 1944, again from YURIJ (Tarasov) to PETROV (Beria), contains the explanation of the terms sent in the previous message. This is one of the rare examples of internal codes in Venona messages, a procedure reserved for special operations and matters concerning the internal security of the Soviet mission, when the sender wanted to minimize the code clerk's knowledge of the content and subject matter (each message would have been handled by a different code clerk). Such internal codes are in effect ad hoc covernames/terms, extended considerably beyond their usual scope. Unfortunately, many of the code terms and/or the corresponding defintions could not be recovered, and new terms, not recovered in the original message are found here. Overall, about 244 groups in this message were unrecovered or unrecoverable. In the following I have only given the recovered terms: if a term or definition is not found, then it is among the unrecovered/unrecoverable groups (and, unaccounted for in the following, that is, I have not stated the number of groups missing at a particular point in the message):

**We report herewith the code for telegram [internal number] 41:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT** | **– to contact** |
| **RECIPE** | **–** |
| **DISSOLVED** | **– taken** |
| **VALUABLE** | **– encoded** |
| **MIXTURE** | **– plan** |

*XVIII. KGB SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN THE U.S. AND MEXICO*

| | |
|---|---|
| **REPAIR** | **– the RITA affair** |
| **GNOME** | **– RITA** |
| **HEALTH** | **–** |
| **WAREHOUSE** | **– Court of law** |
| **THEORY** | **– Road** |
| **RETORT** | **– machine gun** |
| **GLYCERINE** | |
| | **– our combat groups** |
| **TWO POLICE CONSTABLES** | **–** |
| | **– pistol** |
| **STOVES** | **– [un]crowded streets** |
| **WILL BE STRENGTHENED** | **–** |
| | **– they will transfer from one place to another** |
| **TEMPERATURE** | **– reduction of the guard** |
| **AUTHOR** | **– house** |
| **SODA** | **– motor car** |
| **ZONE** | **–** |
| **BY DIRECT** | **– by contraband** |
| **SOIL** | **–** |
| **IT TURNED OUT THAT THE CONDITIONS WERE DIFFICULT** | |
| **INVENTION** | **– Senator Paloma** |
| **CHEMISTS** | **–** |
| **CONDITIONS** | **–** |
| **SCIENTISTS** | **– Mexicans** |
| **ELEMENTS** | **– groups** |
| | **– suspicion** |
| **LOAD** | **– Military** |
| **TEST** | **– Bribery** |
| **EXHIBIT** | **– deputy for political affairs** |

**We send the whole group our warm wishes for the New Year [an add-on to message, signed by SEMEN, the code clerk, rlb]**

The basic message cannot be fully understood, though it looks like an ambush was in the works. But as we know that Frank Jacson wasn't released or rescued from jail anyway, the main interest is the tradecraft, especially some terms recovered in the definitions message, but not in the basic message: machine gun, pistol

and "our combat groups". Clearly the KGB had a plan that called for considerable armed manpower using combat groups composed of Spanish and Mexican Communists, and maybe Russians and Americans too.[18]

"The person directing the case is TOM"

Whatever the cause for the failure of the first effort to get Frank Jacson out of jail, the planning continued.[19] Several KGB messages of the first half of 1944 refer to covername TOM: General Leonid Eitingon, who had been been in Mexico in 1940 as the KGB's on-scene chief of the successful operation to murder Trotsky.[20] In this set of messages more veterans of the Spanish Civil War appear, especially the troublesome agent PEDRO, identified as Jesus Hernandez Tomas, Communist Minister of Education in one of the Spanish Republican cabinets. The following messages, presented chronologically, take the Venona story of the GNOME operation to mid–1944.

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 110, from VIKTOR (no address found) concerns operational security measures as part of the fallout of the failed rescue mission. PEDRO = the aforementioned Jesus Hernandez Tomas; JOSE = u/i covername and GNOME = the imprisoned Frank Jacson.:

> **In reply to your No. 83. Expedite the dispatch of JOSE to Cuba. Permit ANTON's meeting with PEDRO. ANTON should deny [c% the meeting with] you and everything connected with GNOME. You will be given further instructions.**

• Those "further instructions" from the Center followed two days later in Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 114, 22 February 1944, from PETROV (Beria). No address found. The ANTON of this and the preceding message is carried as an u/i covername, but he certainly could fit a Spanish Communist Party official of that name who arrived in Mexico at about that time: Francisco Anton, former railroad clerk, secretary of the Madrid Communist Party at the start of the Civil War and high echelon Political Commissar during the war. He was thought to be a lover of Dolores Ibarruri, known as La Pasionaria, head of the Spanish Communist Party in exile and a rival of GNOME's mother, KGB agent Claridad Mercador. Beria's instructions:

> **Further the instructions given you about PEDRO.**
>
> **1. Get a letter from PEDRO addressed to TOM [General Eitingon] and send a summary of it by telegram.**
>
> **2. If ANTON has already had a meeting with PEDRO, inform us of the results of it too.**
>
> **3. Let ANTON calm PEDRO down and pass on greetings from TOM**
>
> **[26 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **[1 group unrecovered] for a journey to Argentina on special work.**

[18] The footnote to the 1978 reissue of the translation of this message says that combat groups (BOEVAYa GRUPPA), were "sent abroad by the [KGB] to perpetrate sabotage, assassination etc." Combatants drawn from local resources would certainly have included Spanish Communist emigres who were veterans of the Civil War.

[19] The first effort found in Venona that is.

[20] During the Spanish Civil War, Eitingon had been a principal assistant to "Alexander Orlov" who headed KGB operations in Spain. Eitengon, known during those days as LEONID and Colonel Leonid Kotov, had the overt position of advisor to some of the International Brigades. In later years, after the Trotsky operation, he reportedly organized the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate von Papen, the German ambassador to Turkey. He may have served as deputy chief of the Fourth Directorate or Spetsbyuro No. 1, an organization that planned and directed terrorist activites and assassinations and operated a center that conducted experiments in interrogative technique (drugs, hypnosis, polygraph etc.) He spent some time in prison in Russia after World War II, was released by Beria, and then imprisoned again after Beria was shot in 1953.

**5. Let ANTON warn PEDRO**

**[[9 groups unrecovered]**

**This conduct of PEDRO's could be caused by the circumstances which have arisen around him. Therefore here one must weigh things up soberly so as not to draw any hasty conclusions.**

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 132, 1 March 1944, from PETROV probably concerns the $20,000 that Mexico City had urgently requested just before the GNOME operation was to begin:

**[15 groups unrecovered] Make payment in the currency received by you. Return 16 thousand to MAKSIM [the KGB Resident in Washington, rlb].**

• Mexico City —> Moscow, Nos. 193, 194, 14 March 1944, to PETROV (signature not recovered) summarizes the order of battle for the GNOME operation. Unfortunately about 700 groups were unrecoverable/unrecovered and six of the covernames in the message remain unidentified. The first seven paragraphs follow, with missing groups noted. The important covernames:

TOM = General Eitingon
LUKA = Pavel Klarin, local head of the operation
JUAN = KGB agent and thug, Juan Gaytan Godoy
ANTON = u/i covername or Francisco Anton, see above
HARRY = KGB senior agent Jacob Epstein
YURIJ = Lev Tarasov, KGB Resident, Mexico City
SURGICAL = the operation to free GNOME
JUANITA = u/i covername
ANITA = u/i covername

**[73 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

**that the person directing the case is TOM but his representative here [1 group unrecovered] LUKA [7 groups unrecovered] and JUAN to inquire of ANTON. Mutual relations are entirely normal. Neither JUAN nor HARRY and the others know YURIJ.**

**3. If a SURGICAL operation is intended, then the plan**

**[27 groups unrecoverable]**

**SURGICAL operation JUAN accepted with great relief since according to his information and [3 groups unrecovered], if the groups did acutally exist. The decision to disband the groups was communicated by ANTON, on TOM's personal instructions.**[21]

**5. [mention of earlier telegram numbers/dates, rlb]**

**6. The question of JUANITA arose in connection with our intention to establish direct contact with her [2 groups unrecovered] actual situation [c% and telegraph at once] the measures which are being carried out. Her name was mentioned by JUAN, who also said she used to work in the field of military propaganda in CUBA**

**[54 groups unrecoverable]**

[21] The Groups must be the KGB "combat groups" described earlier. This message does not clarify TOM's physical location.

**However, as regards the running of ANITA, JUAN is trying to get control of her. He is maintaining contact with ANTON. With LUKA we are discussing and planning steps to be taken. None of these people knows LUKA's or ANTON's position, real name or place of residence.**[22]

[Summary by rlb: in the next part of the message about 200 groups are missing. Some of the phrases that could be recovered included: a 'SURGICAL getaway' which would somehow involve covernames JOSE and JUAN; and, 'VOLK was met on one occasion by ANTON who will in future meet him'. VOLK, meaning Wolf, was probably magazine editor Rosendo Gomez Lorenzo. The message then discusses covername KON (CHESS KNIGHT) who may have been Jose David Alfaro Siqueiros who had fled to Cuba and Chile after some of the early failed attempts to murder Trotsky. The message includes this complete sentence on the subject: 'I presume that KON returned with a sound guarantee of his safety from influential people.'[23] The remainder of the message includes several interesting paragraphs on tradecraft and operational matters, quoted below, less an internal accounting of missing groups which are indicated by ...]:

**we support the opinion which he has formed that the obtaining of a considerable sum from the [CENTER] and our work here are bound up with the completion of the operational task as regards EUROPE [u/i covername or term?]. He accepted the transfer of LUKA in a good- natured way and without any suspicions.**[24]

**[49 groups unrecoverable]**

**by which letters were received from ARTHUR [u/i covername] and HARRY and also about surveillance of NON [Ruth Beverly Wilson, wife of HARRY/Epstein, rlb] and the the courier 'A' who came to [Mexico] for liaison with HARRY but achieved nothing. There were two occurences of surveillance of LUKA during meetings with NON in [NYC] ... both times LUKA evaded the surveillance. It was also suspected that, on the two occasions when there were meetings with NON for technical liaison .... from the meetings under surveillance 'A'**

**[5 groups unrecovered]**

**.... surveillance in the [U.S.] .... In [Mexico] and HARRY. JUAN established that he himself was under surveillance in December... JUAN .... of a possible surveillance connected with his past political activity, but the precise causes and sources of the surveillance have not been established ..... in his opinion the surveillance started in connection with HARRY's departure**

**[200 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

**In HOSPITAL G. [31 groups unrecovered]**

---

[22] This suggests that ANTON was a KGB officer rather than agent.

[23] That is: influential people in Mexico had guaranteed his safety if he returned.

[24] This paragraph may be a discussion of the views of the Mexico City Resident Tasarov — that he accepted the fact that LUKA was running an independent special operation in his territory.

The last three recovered words must have been some further comment about G[NOME] in prison [HOSPITAL].[25]

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 167, 17 March 1944, from PETROV (Beria) is an analysis of of the agent situation in Mexico City along with instructions — probably to Pavel Klarin [LUKA] though no address is given in the message. PEDRO, Jesus Hernandez Tomas, had become a problem — but the Center obviously considered him an important asset:

> **From PEDRO's letter addressed to TOM [General Eitingon], it is evident that MIJE and DON are striving to compromise PEDRO and isolate him from [Communist Party] work. We instruct you to observe the following principles:**
>
> **1. Do not interfere in the work of the [members of the Communist Party].**
>
> **2. Establish liaison with PEDRO as our source and arrange [6 groups unrecovered] forbid PEDRO to meet AMOR, pass on the gist of the letter and greetings from TOM. Concerning the attitude of MIJE and DON to PEDRO**
>
> **[19 groups unrecoverable]**[26]

MIJE and DON, the persons accused by Beria of trying to compromise PEDRO, were also veteran Spanish Communists who had fled Spain with the defeat of the Republican – Communist side by Franco. DON = probably Spanish C.P. leader Vicente Uribe Galdeano, while MIJE is a truename: Antonio Mije Garcia, an ex-anarchist and a senior Political Commissar (like Francisco Anton) in the Communist units of the Spanish Republican Army. Covername AMOR, the agent Beria forbade PEDRO from meeting, was another Spanish communist, Margarita Nelkin Mansberger de Paul.[27]

## The GNOME Affair Continues

KGB discussion of the GNOME affair continued into 1945 with new plans and personalities introduced from time to time. Following are additional messages on the subject:

• Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 212, 25 March 1944, to PETROV concerns the precarious security situations of HARRY (Jacob Epstein) and his wife:

> **1. In view of the fact that HARRY is under surveillance by the Americans and his wife is under surveillance in [NYC] his arrest in the [U.S.] is possible. Therefore I think it advisable for the time being to send him to CUBA, which is the place form which he arrived in [Mexico], and after the conclusion of the GNOME affair [will] permit him to return to the [U.S.]**

[25] At least four translations of this message were issued over the years, the last in 1973.

[26] After the unrecoverable groups, the remainder of the message consists of instructions for exhange of passwords, but we do not know who is involved — possibly PEDRO:

[KGB officer]: Excuse me sir, but is it possible that I have met you in Europe?

[Agent]: Perhaps in Paris, in the Champs–Elysees.

[KGB officer]: Or in the Place de L'Etoile.

[27] An OSS report of probably 1944, based on unidentified reports of May – June 1941 about major subversives in Mexico, notes that Nelken "actually led some of the bloody purges in Spain". (Venona Collection, 66–12c) She also appears in Venona as covername MARGO and is known to have exchanged secret-writing letters with KGB NY, using the book Opera for cipher construction (a so-called book system). In 1943, General Eitingon, covername TOM reportedly asked a Spanish communist being dispatched to Mexico to speak to Magda de Paul Nelken (AMOR/MARGO's daughter) to tell the young woman, who had been his lover, that he could not marry her.

[very little of remainder of message recovered except for a reference to LUKA, rlb]

• Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 218, 29 March 1944, to PETROV returns to the subject of a jailbreak. While GNOME is not found in the recovered text, we can assume the message concerned him (otherwise it would not have been addressed to Beria). Covernames KITE and LORD are unidentified :

[first part of message poorly recovered, remainder quoted below rlb]

**8th April when conditions will be eased, the vigilance of the warders will be relaxed and the press will close down for two days.[28]Taking into consideration the great advantages of this date, we set about examining with KITE the possibility of affecting the escape with the help of a ... senior warder in case .... we do not succeed in bringing in another. We are obliged to advance the date of the escape ... in view of the fact that KITE's position in HOSPITAL [prison] is becoming less favorable.**

**3. We are continuing the discussion with LORD, a member of the [Mexican Justice Ministry] in view of the continuing intrigues round**

**[remaining 59 groups unrecoverable]**

• Mexico City —> Moscow, No, 229, 2 April 1944, to PETROV is mostly unrecovered (about 400 groups missing) and the signature could not be found. Covername JUAN (Juan Gaytan Godoy), the Mexican magazine TODO, and coverterm WAREHOUSE (Mexican Justice Ministry) are mentioned. The only coherent phrase recovered:

**Furthermore the journalist added that GNOME enjoyed special privileges in [prison] and had his own people ...[29]**

• Mexico City —> Moscow, Nos. 238, 239, 6 April 1944 to PETROV is another mostly unrecovered message (almost 400 groups missing). The first sentence of the message says that the day before ANTON had had a meeting with GLYCERINE (both covernames unidentified — see earlier discussion of ANTON). Mexico City KGB's difficulties with the agent PEDRO, Jesus Hernandez Tomas, were interfering with the GNOME project. Some extracts:

**The situation around PEDRO has become extremely heated.**

**********

**decided for the moment not to speak to him regarding his talkativeness about the G. affair. MIJE and PEDRO are too petty politicians and are ambitious careerists. They may go to great lengths in their struggle. Proceeding from the fact that the G. project must be carried out no matter what the difficulties and wishing to forestall unnecessary danger coming from that quarter, I consider it essential for the CENTER to intervene rapidly in the PEDRO affair.**

• Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 281, 21 April, to VIKTOR returns to the subject of Jacob Epstein's [HARRY's] departure from Mexico:

[28] Sunday, 9 April 1944 was Easter.

[29] GNOME/Frank Jacson did indeed enjoy special privileges in prison. The Mexican government at that time still showed a friendly attitude toward communism and the Soviet Union. Clearly, the KGB's greatest concern was that at some point Frank Jacson might tell his story to the government or press.

**1. HARRY's departure depends only on JUAN [Juan Gayton Godoy] I am doing everything possible to get the necessary documents from him without delay.**

**2. The affair GNOME ....**

[remaining 105 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable except for one mention of u/i covername GLYCERINE]

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 288, 11 May 1944, Personal for YURIJ (the Resident, Lev Tasarov) gives the Center's OK on Epstein:

**We sanction HARRY's departure for the [U.S.]. Let him leave immediately. Advise the results.**

• Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 474, 6 June 1944, to VIKTOR is a complete update on the progress of the GNOME case, with some new sources and methods being mentioned. Covername IZOBRETENIE (INVENTION), who has not been identified, had now become a main part of the GNOME planning:

**1. For dealing with the GNOME project we shall make active use in the [Supreme Court of Justice][30] of IZOBRETENIE, who up to now has only been a tenant of one of the hiding places.[31]**

**2. IZOBRETENIE has long been connected with the GNOME project. Even before TOM's arrival, when here in this same direction[32]**

**[22 groups unrecoverable]**

**3. IZOBRETENIE is very close to the Governor of a Federal State, ROJO GOMEZ,[33] in the future BARS, who [5 groups unrecovered] ACHIEVEMENT [u/i covername].**

**[12 groups unrecovered]**

**with the DIRECTOR [u/i].**

**4. IZOBRETENIE**

**[23 groups unrecovered]**

**G[NOME] and perfecting plans for actually driving in for the escape itself. We have [5 groups unrecovered] ANTON and IZOBRETENIE will be accomplished with the the knowledge of GLYCERINE [u/i] and JUAN , through VOLK [Rosendo Gomez Lorenzo].**

**[12 groups unrecovered]**

**6. IZOBRETENIE said that he was not au courant with our measures ..... dissuade from helping precipitately**

**[some poorly recovered sentences follow and are excluded, rlb; after which:]**

[30] In the final reissue of the translation (1973), the coverterm MAIN WAREHOUSE [GLAVNYJ SKLAD] is called "possibly the Supreme Court of Justice" which would be consistent with the identification in other messages, that WAREHOUSE = Mexican Ministry of Justice.

[31] Possibly meaning that he lived at a safe house or a place where Frank Jacson might be hidden in case of a successful break.

[32] TOM = General Leonid Eitingon. I don't know if "even before TOM's arrival" means before he came to Mexico in 1940 to supervise the murder of Trotsky or if TOM had returned to Mexico sometime later. This is the last Venona mention of TOM.

[33] That is, Dr. Javier Rojo Gomez, Mexican lawyer and politician who had been Governor of the state of Hidalgo and the head of the Federal District. Note the assignment of a covername in the same message.

**7. In HOSPITAL [prison] he saw Doctor Esther CHAPA, in the future LATA, who gave GNOME medical treatment out of sympathy for him. LATA is still working in the HOSPITAL**

**[about 63 groups not recovered, the covername GLYCERINE mixed among these, rlb]**

**this correspondence and use LATA [Dr. Chapa] for this; she is an old [Communist Party member], a prominent doctor and bacteriologist and keeps in touch on scientific matters with our scientists .... She is about 40 years old and is the first wife of VOLK, who speaks highly of her.[34] There are the following possibilities for liaison:**

**[remaining 76 groups unrecoverable]**

• Mexico City —> Moscow, Nos. 553–554, 29 June 1944, YURIJ to VIKTOR, is a very long message on local intrigue related to the GNOME project: Mexico City KGB does not trust their agent JUAN — Juan Gaytan Godoy, the sometime taxi driver and and thug. Relatively few groups are missing from this message, so we get an exceptionally good picture of the status of the GNOME special operation:

**Further to our report No. 2 on the GNOME project,[35] we report the following about JUAN:**

**As was to be expected, our measures to eliminate superfluous go-betweens, and the fact that ANTON has gone over to direct liaison with the people who are to do the job, aroused dissatisfaction and opposition on JUAN's part.[36] Seeing that from the time of our arrival the project has been tackled more energeticaly and has been firmly directed, he realized tha he could no continue in the role of leader and that he was losing a source of easy money. The facts set out below finally expose JUAN as an adventurer and thief. Wishing to take advantage of his remaining opportunities and being suspicious of the measures which we are carrying out parallel to his own, he is trying to get at the real significance of these measures (this cannot be explained away as pure curiosity) and is pursuing the following course:**

**1. He demanded 1,700 pesos from us for the repair of a motor[boat?] [[24 groups unrecoverable]**

**the possibility of our sending a man to VERACRUZ to check that the vessel is there, J. states that it has gone for refit to HONDURAS, which is pure invention, as the facilities for refitting are considerably better in V.**

**2. Then he informed us that there was a chance of [c% processing][37] two more HOSPITAL [prison] supervisors**

**[26 groups unrecovered]**

**after a month J. demanded 7,500 pesos for this purpose, which we refused him on the grounds that such an arrangement would at once cause suspicion, since anyone trying to obtain a post at a salary of 150 pesos a month, could not afford a bribe of 7,500 pesos.**

[34] VOLK = KGB agent Rosendo Gomez Lorenzo, editor of the magazine "Tiempo".

[35] Report No. 2 = probably a written report that had gone out by courier.

[36] This tends to confirm that u/i covemame ANTON was a KGB officer rather than an agent.

[37] Another example of translating the KGB term of art OFORMLENIE as "processing".

**Thereupon J. lowered the sum to 3,500, and when we did not agree to that either – he asked for 1,500.**

**3. In January he received from us several repeat several thousand pesos for the purchase of a second truck supposedly for VOLK's group. Recently VOLK reported that he had not received any second truck and knew about the first one only from what J. had said.**

**4. J. then stated that the two cars he had, had broken down. We commissioned him to sell them, with a view to buying new ones and putting them in more reliable hands. J. stated that it was impossible to sell them but did not explain why. He hinted that he had sold them himself long ago.**

**5. J. took 2,500 pesos from us for arranging HARRY's [Jacob Epstein's] documents, and then he returned the old documents without having done anything.**

**A second element in J.'s behavior is more serious:**

**1. Recently LUKA's presence**

**[42 groups unrecoverable]**

**of him also and that it is carried out by the POLECATS [Trotskyites]. In order to organize this business J. received another 500 pesos. Soon both reported that surveillance had ceased and that is was organized by [c% the Americans], but still later J. stated that it was the work of the Mexican police. I am inclined to think that the surveillance was a guard placed on HARRY at his own request by J., as HARRY [3 groups unrecovered] and might assume that meetings at night with LUKA might not [3 groups unrecovered].**

**During the course of the last few weeks ANTON has observed very clumsy surveillance of himself by three Mexicans with a car. On one occasion he approached one of them and struck up a derisive conversation. The intelligence agent was very embarrassed and tried awkwardly to justify himself. ANTON demdanded that J. send one of the cars to his house in order to observe and identify the people and car carrying out surveillance of him. Despite all promises, J. did not send a car.**

**3. J. continually fails to appear at pre-arranged meetings, which compelled ANTON to go one night to his house. At J.'s house ANTON saw the car which was shadowing him, which, upon observing him, quickly disappeared. After this J. told ANTON an unsatisfactory tale which he had thought up to the effect that his driver was supposed to have succeeded in getting to know the driver of the car carrying outg surveillance of ANTON and that this driver had stated that he belonged to the police of the town of PUEBLA. From this, one is supposed to draw the conclusion tha [d% the surveillance] is being carried out, not by the POLECATS [Trotskyites], Americans or Mexicans, as he had said earlier, but by the men of Maximino AVILA CAMACHO (the brother of the President) who is notorious for his arbitrary actions, gangster raids, kidnapping people in the street and so forth. This version is intended to frighten us.**

**All this goes to show very convincingly that the surveillance was organized by J. himself because the GNOME project is slipping from his grasp. We are faced with the task of**

**determining exactly what J.'s motives are – mere curiosity or the more serious reasons we set out in the first report. At the moment the only support for the latter is as follows:**

**J. is the right-hand man of TEXAS – the Editor in Chief of Sh...'s newspaper.[38] I wrote in detail about TEXAS in my letters**

**[19 groups unrecoverable]**

**[note by rlb: the rest of this message is exceptionally interesting]**

**in a collection of all kinds of political adventurers and also open and secret POLECATS. Through carelessness on the part of Sh... and MAKSIM, T. has been put in the picture about the work of our illegal, ADA.[39] Moreover J. is closely linked with the leaders of the opposition here, which is excluded from the Communist Party of Mexico. This gives rise to the supposition that he is connected with elements which are hostile to us and that he is acting in their interests. The difficulties are greatly increased by the fact that J. is a trusted member of our apparatus,. {c% the forthcoming] hand-over of the project to higher authority and the start which has been made on setting up a new, parallel apparatus, consisting for the time being of IZOBRETENIE and LATA give us time to maneuver with J., making it seem that, for the sake of his own personal safety, we are switching him to work on general political intelligence. [3 groups unrecovered] routine orientation with regard to the situation.**

So, the KGB in Mexico was about to hand over the GNOME project to higher authority — and toward that end it had started a parallel net, which would be unknown to oldtimers like JUAN. The new recruits included IZOBRETENIE, a u/i person with high level Ministry of Justice connections, and LATA = Dr. Esther Chapa, a veteran C.P. member who worked at the prison where GNOME was kept. Unfortunately the remaining GNOME messages recovered from Venona do not tell us about the "higher authority" who would be running the GNOME case.

## Floyd Miller's Trip Report

NY —> Moscow, Nos. 1143–1144, 10 August 1944, to VITKOR, signature not recovered, gives a long account by the New York Residency of the Trotskyite situation in Mexico. In this message NY KGB uses the old covername RITA for Frank Jacson, instead of the newer covername GNOME that the Mexico City Residency had been using for sometime. A number of familiar covernames seen earlier in the chapter or elsewhere in this study appear, including:

Khe... = Floyd Cleveland Miller, aka Mike Cort, a veteran KGB agent working Trotskyite matters

The OLD WOMAN = Mrs. Trotsky, widow of the man murdered by GNOME.

BOB = Robert Owen Menaker, another KGB agent working this target.

[38] TEXAS = Alejandro Carrillo Marcor; Sh... = Vincente Lombardo Toledano, a Mexican Communist and KGB agent was also of interest to the OSS. In 1942, General Donovan dispatched two OSS officers to Mexico to examine the German and Japanese threat in that country. One of these officers was Maurice Halperin, an important KGB agent inside the OSS. They were to talk to Vincente Lombardo Toledano among others. The FBI got the OSS mission recalled as Mexico was FBI turf.

[39] In other words Vincente Lombardo Toledano (Sh...) and Vasilij Zubilin (MAKSIM), the KGB Resident in Washington DC, had told newspaper editor Alejandro Carrillo Marcor about the secret work of KGB illegal ADA. ADA = Kitty Harris, onetime common law wife of Earl Browder, Chairman of the American Communist Party and KGB agent. I don't know how Zubilin/MAXIM fit into the KGB's Mexico operations.

*XVIII. KGB SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN THE U.S. AND MEXICO*

True name ROURKE, found at the beginning of the message, was Walter Rourke, Mrs. Trotsky's bodyguard and personal assistant. The message:

**1. The task concerning sending the letter to [Mexico City] has been carried out. The letter**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**all materials on ROURKE.**

**[39 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

**the letter as you proposed was not sent.**

**2. KhE... has returned to [NYC] from [Mexico]. The authorities did not molest him when crossing the border. KhE... has submitted a detailed report on his trip. He obtained the the names and addresses of the most active POLECATS [Trotskyites] in [Mexico]. He has described in detail the position in the OLD WOMAN's house. He has reported the departure from [for?] the [U.S.] of ROURKE, Victor SERGE and GORKIN.[40] SERGE has apparently broken with the [Trotskyites], [and the] P.O.U.M. people and left wing socialists, and has retired from the editorial board of 'MUNDO'. Recently SERGE and GORKIN's apartment was [c% raided] by the [Mexican police]. There is some information to the effect that on arrival in the [U.S.] they will attempt to organize a separate group round themselves. He has described the situation of the Spanish, German and [Mexican] sections of the [Trotskyites] and the relations between them and the OLD WOMAN. The latter intends to demand a renewal of the investigation of the effects of Robert Sheldon HART who was murdered1[41]**

**[63 groups unrecoverable]**

**With the judge's permission ROURKE succeeded in photographing the RITA [same as GNOME, rlb] file. The film is kept in the OLD WOMAN's house.[42]**

**GORKIN related that a close friend of his in [Mexico] was one of our fellow workers. He states that TYuLEN [SEAL] and the 'head of the GPU' in Mexico had a difference of opinion concerning the method of combatting the [Trotskyites].[43] The latter is supposed to have insisted on the use of terrorism**

**[26 groups unrecovered]**

**[c% trip] KhE ... has been continuing to work on coastal steamers to obtain a further postponement of his call up and for this reason will be unable for some time to concern himself regularly with the [Trotskyites]**

---

[40] Victor Serge, an alias for Victor L'vovich Kubalchich, who had been a Bolshevik leader, but was exiled from Russia in 1933. He went to France and then to Mexico, and was active in Trotskyite affairs. GORKIN was the nomme de guerre of JulianGomez Garcia, a Spaniard who was in Russia in the 1920s but broke with Stalin in disgust. He returned to Spain and formed the P.O.U.M., a Trotskyite party active in the Civil War on the side of the Republic but which was in turn attacked by the KGB and its Spanish Communist allies.

[41] Robert Sheldon Hart had been a bodyguard of Trotsky's killed in one of the earlier attempts on Trotsky.

[42] In other words a Mexican judge had permitted Rourke to copy the file on the Trotsky murder and conviction of RITA/GNOME for the crime.

[43] TYuLEN (SEAL) = probably an earlier covername for Constantine Umanskij, Soviet Ambassador to Mexico, later known as covername REDAKTOR (EDITOR), who did not approve of the KGB's methods in Mexico.

**However by making use of his successfully accomplished trip we will continue to put him forward for the staff [of the Trotskyites] and strengthen his authority with the [Trotskyites].**[44]

**While KhE... was in [Mexico] the [Mexican C.P.] in their paper 'La Voz' of the 7th of July said that one of the chief [Trotskyites] of the [U.S.] had recently arrived. This also is being used by us to strengthen KhE..'s position. KhE..'s report we will send by post.**

**Khe.. has learnt of BOB's return to [NYC] and has told us that he is afraid of failure with the [Trotskyites] because of BOB's excessive talkativeness. The latter told his relatives that he was not a [Trotskyite] and gave them to understand that he worked on assignments. KhE.. is afraid that this may get to the ears of the [Trotskyites] and they may become suspicious of KhE.. as he came to them through BOB.**

3. [Summary by rlb: 28 groups unrecoverable in this final paragraph; the paragraph discusses future opportunites for TULIP (Mark Zborowski) to work against the Trotskyites but notes that he was busy with the KOMAR case]

The GNOME Case October 1944–August 1945

**GNOME in retirement.**

Venona provides no resolution of the GNOME case, though readable messages from October 1944 to August 1945 introduce additional covernames and show Caridad Mercador, GNOME's mother, on the scene in Mexico.

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 626, 29 October 1944, from VIKTOR concerns the security of KGB agent HARRY, Jacob Epstein, onetime principal in the GNOME case. HARRY was hiding out in another Central American country, most likely Guatamala or Honduras, or possibly Cuba, covername VILLAGE, whose security service knew about his connection to KGB officer Pavel Klarin, sometime head of the GNOME operation:

[44] Miller's work on coastal steamers and avoiding a callup — he qualified for a draft deferment while serving in the merchant marine.

**According to reliable information at our disposal [6 groups unrecovered] HARRY. The VILLAGE COMPETITORS [the local country security service] have put their finger on the contact between HARRY and LUKA. It has been established by them that HARRY**

**[about 100 groups unrecovered]**

**COMPETITORS. Take appropriate precautionary measures.**

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 653, 15 November 1944, from VIKTOR discusses some of the new measures regarding the GNOME case. However, about 175 groups were not recovered and half of the covernames remain unidentified. The Mexico City Resident, Lev Tarasov (YURIJ) left Mexico City in December 1944 for a visit to the U.S. and Soviet Union; he did not return. In this message VIKTOR gives him instructions about the arrangements for handling agents in his absence. Comments follow the message:

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**people working on the GNOME case**

**[17 groups unrecovered]**

**no new operational measures in connection with the GNOME case [9 groups unrecovered] PATRIOT, OLIVER, REMBRANDT [5 groups unrecovered] MEXICO CITY. Warn them that they are personally responsible [12 groups unrecovered] so that REMBRANDT cannot be got out of MEXICO CITY**

[note by rlb: about 150 groups are missing in the next part of the message, but the recovered phrases are interesting: 'legalization of PATRIOT, OLIVER and REMBRANDT' and later 'ADA' and the 'special position of ADA'. The message continues:]

**position and possibilities of SKIPPER for his legalzation.**

**7. Arrange passwords for contact and meeting places with the agent network that you have: BASQUE, STAKHANOVITE, AMOR, SEDA, ACQUAINTANCE, and others. Keep them together with their addresses and surnames in the Office [Residency]. We consider it advisable to come to a mutual understanding with BASQUE on a supplementary password in case of his arrival.. and discontinue liaison with him right away so as not to compromise him before his departure.**

**8. Leave money for the maintenance of PATRIOT, OLIVER, REMBRANDT, ANTON and ADA and also for the additional payment for our work with SEMEN. Advise the date of your departure.**

The message opens by calling attention to the people working the GNOME case and probably tells Tarasov/YURIJ that no operations concerning the GNOME case were to take place in his absence. ADA = Kitty Harris, former common law wife of Earl Browder and at this stage an illegal in Mexico. Paragraphs 7. and 8. probably list the Residency's major agent assets, other than those working the GNOME case. Some of those who were identified:

OLIVER = Antonio Gomez Deans

REMBRANDT = Jose Sancha Padros

AMOR = Margarita Nelken Mansberger de Paul

SEDA = possibly Elena Vasquez Gomez

SEMEN = u/i cipher clerk in the embassy

The Trouble with YURIJ

The GNOME case did not go well for the KGB, in spite of, or perhaps because of, a variety of players and methods. Tarasov/ YURIJ didn't return to the Mexico City Residency, being replaced in January 1945 by DAR (GIFT), Grigorij Kasparov, who had been the KGB Resident in San Francisco. Several months earlier, DAR had sent Beria (PETROV) a negative appraisal of YURIJ's work that had been written by LUKA, Pavel Klarin, who had been sent in to run the GNOME operation. Klarin had written the report two months earlier, but either he or DAR couldn't get it out because of a "break in communications". Following is the message, San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 321–322, 19 August 1944, from DAR to PETROV:

**We are sending by telegraph a letter of LUKA's.**

**[quote:] YURIJ's light-hearted approach to the GNOME case does not inspire any [confidence] in his ability to cope with the task set him. Working jointly with him has shown that the case is in inexperienced and far from firm hands.**

**[43 groups unrecovered]**

**that it was not done by him and the like. [4 groups unrecovered] YURIJ dropped work and drove off 60 miles to his country cottage, for 2 or 3 days making it impossible for me to co-ordinate urgent matters. He adopted a an impatient attitude to [14 groups unrecovered] despite a direct prohibition against getting in touch with YURIJ [1 group unrecovered] ANTON used to meet him. The use of the latter on the present work will make it impossible if YURIJ is sent away [9 groups unrecovered] this sort of methods [7 groups unrecovered] he used to leave the [Embassy] 10–15 minutes before schedule. My remarks about the breach of instructions [3 groups unrecovered] tried to prevent me from taking part in business from the moment when through ANTON I speeded up GNOME's coming out into**

**[50 groups unrecovered]**

**GNOME's coming out but YURIJ refused**

**[21 groups unrecovered]**

**that we wish the case**

**[18 groups unrecoverable]**

**worker to direct the GNOME case on the spot, making all the resources of the office subordinate to him. [7 groups unrecovered] endless ill-considered and dangerous exercises. YURIJ is living in grand style. He has rented a house with grounds, has two hired servants in addition to [1 group unrecovered], has been breeding poultry, parrots and the like [10 groups unrecovered] director on setting up [3 groups unrecovered] suspicions. Ignoring [3 groups unrecovered] LEONID in [NYC] and there**

**[21 groups unrecovered]**

**and the like. The unnatural closeness of the relations is bewildering everyone. In [Mexico] by reason of his rude and tactless behavior YURIJ is meeting with almost universal**

**hostility from the staff. He systematically sets himself up in opposition to the EDITOR [Ambassador Umanskij], with whom at the present moment this is giving rise to frequent clashes that affect the whole staff. The [Ambassador] asked me to pass on to our leaders that if YURIJ does not alter his line of conduct he will be forced to raise the question of having him sent away. I think that in the interests of our affairs YURIJ should be warned to behave less irresponsibly. [enquote]**[45]

**Forwarding has been held up because of a two months' break in communications.**

GNOME's Mother a Nuisance

Moscow —> Mexico City, Nos. 173, 172, 174, 9–10 March 1945, no signature or address recovered, is a very long, mostly unrecovered message — more than 900 groups missing. Covername KLAVA, Caridad Mercador, mother of the assassin Frank Jacson, appears in this message. It will be recalled that she was a veteran agent, who the KGB considered a "sacred person". Some interesting phrases from the message follow, without reference to the missing groups, and separated by lines of asterisks:

**.....GNOME we shall have to think also of her safety, and this complicates our work. In your work in the future bear in mind that KLAVA's presence in [Mexico] greatly complicates the GNOME project**

**********

**...GNOME on completely new organizational**

**********

**... the political and practical aspects of this project [i.e. the GNOME case, rlb]. The political side of the business should include bringing to light through your existing agents and other resources**

**********

**The practical side of the business includes the detailed study of GNOME's hospital [prison] routine and activities, what sort of watch is kept on him by the special agents of the COMPETITORS [security police] and ... shedding light on people**

**********

**through legal check points, which applies even with the iron, repeat iron, documents.**[46] **He is too well known from photographs ... detained with any documents. He should be taken out**

**********

**GNOME out of [Mexico]**

**********

[45] This is one of several examples where the recommendation doesn't fit the crime: a long denunciation and a mild closing. This must have had something to do with KGB culture and protocol (or was such unthreatening language a pre-arranged euphemism for something else?).

[46] "iron documents" = KGB tradecraft term for genuine, as opposed to forged, documents. But it does not mean the documents would be held by the person with that true name. In other words, a KGB agent might travel on the genuine passport of an American killed in the Spanish Civil War, or might obtain, with a genuine birth certificate, a genuine passport issued in the name of a person who died in childhood.

[note by rlb: some scraps toward the end of the message seem to be criticisms of the GNOME–connected asset ANTON (who could be an agent or officer).

Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 521, 22 August 1945, from VIKTOR is a short, housekeeping message (KLAVA = Caridad Mercador; AMOR = Kitty Harris):

**In future all materials relating to the GNOME case and people connected with this case, and also materials concerning KLAVA, AMOR, and COOKIE [8 groups unidentified]**

"Frank Jacson" eventually was paroled and left Mexico for Czechoslovakia. He never publicly discussed the case or gave his true identity. In spite of the "sacredness" of his mother, one still might believe that the KGB's GNOME operation was intended to end in his death. After the fall of Beria and Eitingon that became unlikely and thus he returned safely to a Communist country.

D. Other Mexico City Operations

This section concerns some other activites of the Mexico City Residency including running illegals and recruiting (or at least assessing) some prominent people. The Mexico City material also contains exhortations from the Center and — so rarely seen in Venona — some Communist Party doubletalk (a message from La Pasionaria).

Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 197, 7 April 1944, from VIKTOR concerns clandestine communications between the Center and the Residency, somewhat on the order of earlier arrangements involving the San Francisco and New York Residencies. Judging from the first paragraph, this would involve test rather than operational traffic:

**Listen to our trial radio transmission on 15, 16 and 17 [1 group unrecovered] following hours. 1600 to 1610 wavelength 21.62; 1700 to 1700 [sic] wavelength 19.07. Call sign MKO.**

[summary by rlb: the message continues with schedules, frequencies and callsigns; and schedules and call signs for probable state radio broadcasts i.e., 'Union broadcasting MOSCOW from 1625 to 1800 ...' and 'KhABAROVSK from 0130 to 0145 ...']

The Return of ZAPATA

Two messages concern the spotting and assessing of a Mexican general:

Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 248, 11 April 1944, to VIKTOR, signature not recovered. The first half of the message, mostly recovered:

**In August 1943, I made the acquaintance of Brigadier–General Roberto CALVO RAMIREZ henceforth ZAPATA commanding [1 group unrecovered] battalion and garrisons of coastal defense of the Northern part of the Peninsula of Lower California with HQ in the town of ENSENADA. From many sources it is known to me that ZAPATA in his youth fought in ZAPATA's detachment and then became one of CARDENAS' trusted generals.[47] Z. is an old enthusiastic supporter of our country and leader, has been a member of the Society of the Friends of the USSR for a number of years. Politically he is half Communist, half Anarchist. A clever and brave man. I always meet him during his rare visits to Mexico City. Up to the present I [7 groups unrecovered] friendly character.**

[47] That is, covername ZAPATA had fought with the Mexican guerilla leader Emiliano Zapata in the Mexican Revolution/civil war of the 1910s. General Lazaro Cardenas was President of Mexico 1934–40 and Minister of Defense thereafter.

**Not far from ENSENADA is [4 groups unrecovered] – Dukhobors who moved thither 40 years ago.**[48]

[note by rlb: only a few groups of rest of message recovered — about 150 groups were not; one recovered phrase says: '1,000 dollars [4 groups unrecovered] Dukhobors']

Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 267, 18 April 1944, YURIJ to VIKTOR continues the report on ZAPATA:

**Further to our [internal no.] 152 here is some additional information about ZAPATA**

**[80 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

**it is reported that furthermore CARDENAS**

**[53 groups unrecoverable]**

**used to chat at showings of our films. Putting [4 groups unrecovered] I [3 groups unrecovered] about Z. concerning whom Sh...**[49] **gave a very good testimonial as being a person devoted to the revolution who had always been on the very left flank of CARDENAS' entourage. He hates Americans and the local reactionaries and has never been involved in bribery and corruption.**

Some High Level Recruiting

Several Mexico City<—>Moscow messages concern the spotting and assessing of some prominent people.

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 287, 11 May 1944, signature and address unrecovered (same for the first half of the message):

**3. Pablo NERUDA is being developed.**

**4. I will give information about the King of Roumania in mail no.2.**

Pablo Neruda, a Communist, and later a Nobel prize winner for literature, was at that time the Chilean consul-general in Mexico City. It is not clear why the Moscow Center is telling Mexico City about the recruitment of a diplomat in Mexico City (or the relevance of the King of Roumania).

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 323, 25 May 1944, from VIKTOR:

**Reference No. 202 [not available].**
**Do not recruit TANYa, [5 groups unrecovered] do not make any arrangements about work.**
**If she is preparing to go to ALGIERS, let her go.**

**[30 groups unrecovered]**

TANYa was Simone Terry (aka: Simone Tery Jacquet de Chabas) a noted left wing French writer. One might guess that Terry had already been recruited.

• Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 533, 24 June 1944, YURIJ to VIKTOR, concerned Marcel Gautier, covername KURD, a French diplomat in Mexico City who the Residency thought might be a good target:

**Further to [internal no.] 233.**
**KURD worked for 25 years in the Ministry of the Colonies and was closely associated with MANDEL who is known to you. He spent many years in administrative colonial bodies**

[48] The Dukhobors were an anarchist religious sect that originated in Russia in the 18th century. They later settled in Canada and elsewhere.

[49] Sh... = KGB asset Vincente Lombardo Toledano.

**in the Near East. After the liberation of SYRIA from the control of VICHY and the establishment of a de GAULLE center there, KURD was appointed Director of the 'Surete General'. He**

**[11 groups unrecoverable]**

The phrase, "MANDEL who is known to you", might have sinister overtones, though one would hope not. Georges Mandel, formerly known as Jeroboam Rothschild, had been a member of the French cabinet, as Minister of the Interior and Minister of the Colonies. French Nazi militia murdered him in 1943.

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 634, 5 November 1944, from VIKTOR cautions the Residency about a clandestine relationship with KURD/Marcel Gautier:

**On 28th June, in reply to your [internal numbers] 233 and 236, we explained to you that your relations with KURD should not go beyond the limits of the official task and that you should be cautious with him. We have established from agent information, which there is no reason to doubt, that ZhUK [u/i covername], who was recruited by you in the [U.S.] and who is an old PROBATIONER [agent] of the [British],**

**[22 groups unrecovered]**

**that you are the object of active study on the part of the COMPETITORS (we have already pointed out to you that [4 groups unrecovered] HARRY because of the VILLAGE and [UK] COMPETITORS.**

**[10 groups unrecovered]**

**[c% the importance] of security[50] and in particular to be careful when establishing new contacts.**

This message may be a general admonition about security in light of the case of u/i covername ZhUK, who was a British agent, the surveillance of HARRY (Jacob Epstein) in the unknown country, covername VILLAGE, and that fact that "you (i.e. the Resident in Mexico City) are the object of active study on the part of the COMPETITORS." The Center might also have had some specific reasons to warn Mexico City about their relations with Marcel Gautier — which contacts were only to be in the legal cover arena.[51]

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 708, 8 December 1944, from VIKTOR sheds some light on one of the KGB's most important recruitments in the U.S.: the Judith Coplon operation. See Chapter XV., especially translation 6. (NY —> Moscow, 5 December 1944) where KGB agent Flora Don Wovschin, who had recently recruited Coplon, was working on M. (name withheld), a mutual friend, who had been given the covername LU by NY KGB. In the following message, Moscow has to use the truename as Mexico City would not have known the covername LU:

**According to information in our possession M. [name withheld], who is of operational interest to us, used to work in the [U.S.] embassy in [Mexico]. In [Mexico] she was working for the naval COMPETITORS [ONI, rlb] and allegedly knows you from meetings in [3 groups unrecovered]. In [3 groups unrecovered] this information, urgently wire us what you know about her and your impression of her and also [1 group unrecovered] letter of**

[50] "security" = the translation of the Russian word in the message: KONSPIRATIsIYa]

[51] Marcel Gautier had been director of the Surete (security police) in Syria and Lebanon, 1941–43, and at the time of the message was the French Commercial Counsellor in Mexico. Given his background, Gautier might have been a representative of French Intelligence.

**recommendation which [1 group unrecovered] write while passing through the OFFICE [Residency] in [NYC or Washington] and leave [4 groups unrecovered].**

As YURIJ was about to depart Mexico City, visiting Washington and New York on his way back to the Soviet Union, the Center wanted him to write a letter of recommendation regarding M./LU when he visited the Residencies in those cities — but he was also to promptly telegraph the Center about M./LU. However, YURIJ must not have reached NYC by 12 January 1945, for on that date NY KGB telegraphed Moscow that they were still waiting for YURIJ's letter of recommendation.[52]

## Illegals and Other Agents

The Mexico City traffic contains many references to illegals, more than the U.S. traffic (except for MER/ALBERT). Venona provides some interesting examples of the problems in running illegals, such as the case of covername REMBRANDT, who was the Spaniard, Jose Sancha Padros.

- Mexico City —> Moscow, Nos. 495–496, 12 June 1944, to VIKTOR, signature unrecoverable concerns REMBRANDT and his girlfriend, and the complaint, from REMBRANDT or someone else that the KGB hasn't treated the illegals fairly. Covername OLIVER = Antonio Gomez Deans (not his truename apparently), another illegal:

**At one of the last meetings REMBRANDT said that there had arrived at his place a girl, M. [name withheld][53], in the future GRINGO, who is known to you from my previous telegrams [not available, rlb], and that she is going to live with him as his wife as she is pregnant and she says there is no other way out. OLIVER, when I called him up, gave the following account: In the Autumn of last year REMBRANDT made GRINGO's acquaintance at the conference of the Anti–Fascist Committee of Refugees.[54] A couple of days after this he became intimate with her and she lived with him for about [1 group unrecovered] months [2 groups unrecovered] when REMBRANDT was ill he wrote for GRINGO to come in December last year and she lived with him another month [4 groups unrecovered] to the [U.S.]. R. corresponded with her, sent money and finally wrote for her to come here so that they could live together. When I demanded**

**[18 groups unrecovered]**

**[c% from the Center] they were promised that their wives would be sent and regular communications with their families ensured, that they were tricked, that they ask it to be brought to the notice of [1 group unrecovered], that we have no right to ruin families and push them into all sorts of liasons, that they**

[52] YURIJ had been instructed in a separate internal message of the message just quoted (Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 708, 8 December 1944) to make arrangements to "leave TYRE [NYC] by ship for Murmansk at the end of December of this year. The trip will take about one and a half months. To obtain a berth on the ship get in touch in the official line with GOLIKOV [of the SGPC in Washington] and he will have to put up a case to the Americans to take you on their ship." This didn't work: YURIJ left at a later date.

[53] M. [name withheld] later known as covername GRINGO subsequently provided the FBI considerable biographical information about herself and the illegals REMBRANDT and OLIVER. However, she declined to discuss anyone's Communist connections, and her information about these illegals cannot be considered definitive (she was not likely to know the complete truth). M./GRINGO admitted extensive work for several organizations that the Attorney General later characterized as Communist/Communist-controlled and we have the KGB's own reporting that she was a C.P. member.

[54] Held in Mexico in August 1943.

**[38 groups unrecoverable]**

**....ed a tendency to put the blame on us for his irresponsible conduct**

[note by rlb: 103 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable around the phrase: 'should think about using this for his getting across to the U.S.' The text continues:]

**1. M. [name withheld, covername GRINGO, rlb] was born in 1913 in Torrington, CONNECTICUT**

**[59 groups unrecoverable]**

**2. In 1936 she joined the party and in 1938 left for [d% Moscow]...**

**3. Up to 1940 she worked in**

**[42 groups unrecoverable]**

**FBI allegedly without any consequences.**

**5. On being sent for she went to Florida to arrange a divorce from her husband and came to [Mexico].**

**6. G[RINGO] insisted on regularizing the marriage and leaving for the [U.S.]. She visited her consul who said that two sponsors in the [U.S.] were needed for REMBRANDT's entry. [13 groups unrecovered] It will be very suspicious if [d% the work] [4 groups unrecoverable] [d% permission] for residence, however, REMBRANDT must be prepared for this as any other way out**

**[about 65 groups unrecovered]**

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 375, 18 June 1944, from VIKTOR is unrecoverable except for two interesting sentences. The Center had not understood item 3 of the message quoted above. PATRIOT = u/i covername:

**Unfortunately**

**[168 groups unrecovered]**

**password.**

**Repeat paragraph No. 3 about GRINGO. It is not clear whether it was she who was arrested in 1941 by the FBI.[55] Or whether in 1940 she was working in the FBI. In which department of propaganda was she working in 1940? [3 groups unrecovered] OLIVER and PATRIOT**

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

• Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 476, 29 July 1944, from VIKTOR is poorly recovered but for this reference to Kitty Harris, an illegal and former mistress of C.P. chairman Browder:

**1. Together with ADA carefully work out a new cover story for her**

[55] The FBI could find no record of her having been questioned, arrested or otherwise connected to the Bureau at that time. The Center also asked NY KGB to check on her and received this reply in NY —> Moscow, No. 1029, 22 July 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR: "ECHO [Bernie Schuster] advises that M. [name withheld, rlb] is in Mexico. She was dismissed from her work on the Spanish committee for slackness. Nothing more is known." In this context "Spanish committee" = the Spanish aid component of the Joint Anti–Fascist Refugee Committee, a Communist front.

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**ADA and**

**[16 groups unrecovered]**

• Moscow —> Mexico City, Nos. 692–693, 3 December 1944, signature unrecovered, carried the Center's instructions regarding REMBRANDT and his girlfriend GRINGO. Most of the message could not be recovered, but what could be shows some of the Center's doctrine and advice on the matter of illegals:

**1. [25 groups unrecovered]**

**REMBRANDT**

**[17 groups unrecovered]**

**[c% GRINGO] [2 groups unrecovered] his trip to [14 groups unrecovered], that GRINGO undoubtedly knows a lot**

**[74 groups unrecovered]**

**has altered the situation, revealing legal possibilities of REMBRANDT's leaving MEXICO and of completely detaching him from the other illegals.**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**and even, if it comes to it, allow REMBRANDT to take GRINGO with him. We were ready to concede this in order to avoid complications with us and [2 groups unrecovered] detach her and REMBRANDT completely from the rest of the illegals. [d% we recommend] you [d% to give the task]**

**[57 groups unrecoverable]**

**group of our people.**

**3. Your proposal about sending off REMBRANDT**

**[61 groups unrecoverable]**

**[Mexico] with the family [9 groups unrecovered] that you have discovered a real opportunity of sending REMBRANDT to SAN FRANCISCO.**

**[67 groups unrecovered]**

**In internal number [331] received on 20th November you say that the possible dispatch of REMBRANDT to South America is difficult and would take a lot of time, but we do not agree that this alternative is impossible. It is always difficult to legalize an illegal and move him from one place to another and takes time**

**[30 groups unrecovered]**

**real possibility of sending REMBRANDT off to another country**

**[168 groups unrecovered]**

The foregoing has at least two themes: that REMBRANDT's marriage to GRINGO might make it possible for REMBRANDT to enter the U.S.; the Residency and the Center had been considering other places to assign and legalize REMBRANDT, e.g. South America.

Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 695, 3 December 1944, signature not recovered, asks for some basic information about illegals in Mexico:[56]

**1. [7 groups unrecovered] information concerning all illegals: who they are and where exactly they work, on what [2 groups unrecovered] they have documents, what they can do with these documents, i.e. can they move about freely [14 groups unrecovered], where exactly they live, how the documents were obtained and who concerning them [2 groups unrecovered].**

**2. Separate REMBRANDT and OLIVER. Warn them they are personally responsible for our task and that they must maintain security.**

**3. We agree to your proposal to hand ANTON over to SEMEN for liaison.**[57]

**4. ANITA [4 groups unrecovered]**[58]

• Moscow —> Mexico City, Nos. 312, 11 May 1945, from VIKTOR contains many instructions from the Center on agent handling, especially illegals. Most of the message was unrecoverable or unrecovered (about 450 groups), but we have enough to understand the message:

**[225 groups unrecoverable; 15 unrecovered]**

**so as not to let Sh . . . .**[59] **feel a break in liaison**

**[48 groups unrecoverable]**

**and STAKhANOVETs's [u/i covername] potentialities.**

**6. Continue to use RABIN [u/i covername] as before and inform us of the results.**

**7. Establish direct liaison with TRIBUN [u/i] in accordance with the instructions left by YURIJ and use him in the field of general political information. Establish with FREGATO [u/i]**

**[12 groups unrecoverable]**

[summary by rlb: the Residency is to learn about Chilean matters and send a a 'character description' of a Chilean who is to be appointed to Moscow]

**9. In view of the fact there is no prospect of this being used, we have excluded VIKTOR from the network.**[60]

**10. With RAPID [u/i] liaison**

**[29 groups unrecoverable]**

---

[56] I do not understand why Moscow asks some of these questions, as it has been generally believed that Illegals were persons dispatched by the Center.

[57] ANTON = u/i covemame often seen in messages quoted earlier in this chapter. Sometimes he seems to be an officer, sometimes an agent. SEMEN = u/i covemame in this context. A different person with covemame SEMEN ran a directorate at the Center and is a frequent addressee in U.S. <—> Moscow lanes.

[58] u/i covemame.

[59] Sh . . . = partially recovered covemame for Vincente Lombardo Toledano.

[60] Not the same VIKTOR as the Moscow personality, Lt. General Fitin.

**has a number of dubious features in his biography. As a lead we recommend bearing in mind ZAPATA[61] and**

[note by rib: for the remainder of message, missing groups not noted; the recovered text separated by asterisks:]

**********

**leave with Sh . .**

**********

**working with illegals . . . . ADA a year ago Sh . . .**

**********

**her to have a talk about this with Sh . . . . . . . . her legalization. The necessary measures have been taken by us**

**********

**inform him that his mother and brother are living at his sister's in RIGA, that they are well and send him greetings and that we are helping them.[62]**

**********

**Try to naturalize OLIVER[63] as a Mexican citizen on . . . for Spanish refugees, according to the already existing . . . Tell him that his wife is well, is living in very comfortable circumstances on the South, sends him greetings and . . . . the position with REMBRANDT from [Mexico], to the [UK] [5 groups unrecovered], to which end take all measures in your power.[64]**

Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 559, 7 September 1945, from VIKTOR is a very late look at the status of the agent networks on Mexico (very little post-1945 traffic on this lane is readable). See especially the last paragraph of the message for the Center's discussion of illegals tradecraft. Three covernames are identified, the rest remain unidentified:

AMOR = Margarita Nelken Mansberger de Paul

ADA = Kitty Harris

PEDRO = Jesus Hernandez Tomas

**We reply to the questions raised in your letter No. 1:**

[61] ZAPATA = Brigadier General Roberto Calvo Ramirez, mentioned in earlier messages. The Center may be using something about the ZAPATA case as a cautionary reminder or suggesting that ZAPATA somehow be used to check out whatever is under discussion.

[62] Here the Center is instructing the Resident to tell one of the illegals that his family is well.

[63] He would be legalized in the name Antonio Gomez Deans.

[64] Again the Center tells Mexico City to assure an illegal, this time OLIVER, that all is well with the family in Russia. Many illegals must have been Spanish Communists, and/or veterans of the International Brigade, recruited by the KGB during the Spanish Civil War, evacuated to Russia with their families, and later dispatched to Mexico as illegals. As for REMBRANDT, he eventually got into the UK, under circumstances partly shown in other Venona traffic.

**1. We agree to the use of TRIBUN and STAKhANOVETs without open liaison being established.**[65]

**2. On the return of DIPLOMAT to [Mexico], do not establish liaison with him.**

**3. Hand FRANK over to GRANT.**

**4. Concerning ZNAKOMYJ's request that he should be replaced by some other person for liaison with LAREDO**

**[49 groups unrecoverable]**

**[1 group unrecovered] from LAREDO [3 groups unrecovered], having chosen a reliable person for this**

**[35 groups unrecoverable]**

**ZNAKOMJY and LAREDO from the house of AMOR and KUKI.**

**6. We consider it advisable that direct liaison should be established between yourself and SKIPPER**

**[59 groups unrecoverable]**

**ADA cannot and should not work with SKIPPER. Send your proposal as to how she should be used in future and also state how you are thinking of completing or putting through her legalization. Particulars of her 'parents' have been sent to you – this being all that was available to us. You may have to think out her legalization on a totally different basis and a LEGENDA [cover story]. State from whom information on PEDRO's behavior was received**[66]

**[43 groups unrecovered]**

Comments on the REMBRANDT, GRINGO and OLIVER Case

This case is hard to follow, in or out of Venona, and some questions remain about the identities of REMBRANDT and OLIVER. The traffic certainly says that they are illegals, but REMBRANDT especially has a good paper trail and it is not clear to me that REMBRANDT is other than who he purported to be, that is, the Jose Sancha Padros who was a Spanish born artist, son of an artist, who had spent much time in the UK during the 1930s. If, in typical illegal fashion, he had assumed the name of Sancha Padros, then we might ask what happened to the latter — who should have been known to many people — and who REMBRANDT really was.[67] OLIVER, legalized as Antonio Gomez Deans, seems to have been potentially less traceable. He told GRINGO that he was French and English and did not learn the Spanish language until he served (with REMBRANDT) in the Civil War. GRINGO, REMBRANDT's mistress, was an American C.P. member but not a recruited agent. The Center's interest in her was operational security and tradecraft: she complicated REMBRANDT's situation, but also offered some opportunities for legally getting him out of Mexico (i.e. as the husband of a U.S. citizen).

[65] Meaning either: use them without recruiting them; or clandestinely use them without an overt cover connection.

[66] PEDRO, Jesus Hernandez Tomas, discussed earlier in this chapter, had been a radical street fighter in Spain as a young man. He was later the Minister of Education in one of the Republican governments during the Spanish Civil War. In the later 1940s he completely broke with the Communists and wrote a book denouncing the Communists and Russians in Spain and Mexico. Before that final break he had withdrawn from certain Communist activities in Mexico, citing some party leadership problems.

[67] I could not find a discussion of this point in the many papers (FBI, CIA and UK) on REMBRANDT held in the Venona collection.

*XVIII. KGB SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN THE U.S. AND MEXICO*

In later interviews with the FBI, GRINGO said that REMBRANDT and OLIVER had lived together in Mexico City and that both had health problems. A NY —> Moscow message, No. 2001, 10 December 1943 comments on this: "REMBRANDT has undergone a serious stomach operation. It went well. He is recuperating . . . .".

An earlier NY message shows how OLIVER, REMBRANDT and two other illegals in Mexico were on the KGB payroll; NY —> Moscow, No. 1623, 5 October, MAKSIM to VIKTOR:

**Herewith the accounts [6 groups unrecovered] from the time of departure for the COUNTRYSIDE [Mexico] up to 1 January 1944:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **1. To NORA [u/i]: Paid out** | **Total 2220 dollars** |
| **Due: Subsistence for 10 month @ 200 dollars** | **– 2000** |
| **[8 groups unrec.] abroad** | **– 225** |
| **Letters of credit for journey** | **– 50** |
| **[total]** | **2275** |
| **Payment outstanding** | **55 dollars** |
| **For [4 grps unrecovered]** | **245 dollars** |
| **Total** | **300 dollars** |
| **2. To REMBRANDT Paid out** | **Total 1550 dollars** |
| **Due: Subsistence for 11 months @ 175 dollars/month** | **– 1925 dollars** |
| **For legalization** | **– 350 dollars** |
| **Total** | **– 2275 dollars** |
| **Payment outstanding** | **– 725 dollars** |
| **3. To OLIVER Paid out** | **Total 1550 dollars** |
| **[note: remainder for OLIVER exactly the same as for REMBRANDT]** | |
| **4. To PAT [u/i][68] Paid out** | **Total 1000 dollars** |
| **Due out of this sum for 6 months at rate of 175/month** | **– 1050 dollars** |
| **[20 groups unrecoverable]** | |
| **[5.?][69] Paid out** | **815 dollars** |
| **Due: Subsistence for 12 months from 1 Jan 1943 to 1 Jan 1944 at the rate of 75 dollars** | **900 dollars** |
| **Food, fuel, furnishing of a safe house for 12 months** | **540 dollars** |
| | **Total 1440 dollars** |

[68] PAT = probably same as u/i covername PATRIOT.

[69] I have assumed that this is item 5. as 1 group unrecovered at this point. This represents, probably, overhead costs for the four illegals rather than being a line item for a fifth illegal.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Total sum paid out** | **7135;** |
| **Total sum due** | **9805;** |
| **Total payments outstanding** | **2670** |

Exhortations, Management Issues and Communist Party Doubletalk

Mexico City —> Moscow, No. 498, 12 June 1944, YURIJ to VICTOR is an example of the internal snitching we often associate with the KGB at Soviet missions abroad:

> **The other day the commercial attache MALKOV without the [Ambassador's] permission organized a sumptuous 'festivity' at his official residence at which there were more than thirty members of the staff. The party was accompanied by noisy songs and shouts attracting**
>
> **[34 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **those who were present. The [Ambassador] issued a special order about this subject, pointing out that such festivities constitute material for the hostile press. [14 groups unrecovered]**

Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 555, 16 June 1944, from VIKTOR sends along some Communist Party stuff: a message from Spanish C.P. leader-in-exile "La Pasionaria", Dolores Ibarruri (here given the thin covername DOLORES), to another Spanish Republican refugee, Vincente Uribe Galdano. La Pasionaria was in Moscow, Uribe in Mexico. A few extracts:

> **Pass on to URIBE the following telegram from DOLORES: In this struggle for the realization of national unity it is necessary to consider the following: . . . . . .**
>
> **In explaining our program and in relations with the rest of the democratic groups recourse must be had to the appropriate friendly language, not permitting personal outbursts. One must argue politically, maintaining cordially in one's relations and not reacting in a hostile fashion to misunderstanding of our policy.**

Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 153, 28 February 1945, signature not recovered, contains some references to one of the mysteries of that time: the death of Ambassador Konstantin Umanskij in a plane crash while en route to Costa Rica to be ambassador there. He had been relieved as ambassador to Mexico and was clearly being demoted. There has been some speculation about KGB sabotage of the plane, but Venona contains no information about that. Covername EDITOR = Ambassador Umanskij:

> **The EDITOR had a wide range of acquaintances and a number of valuable connections in [Mexico]. Direct your attention to bringing the latter to light and switching them to yourself. Consistent and careful work with the EDITOR's connections may become a means of obtaining valuable information. It will also help to widen both your own and GRANT's [u/i covername] connection**
>
> **[about 100 groups unrecoverable; a few meaningless phrases not given here, rlb.]**

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The last two paragraphs of Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 154, 2 March 1945, contain an interesting exhortation from, probably, VIKTOR to DAR, who had been Resident for less than two months:[70]

> **4. [2 groups unrecovered] you yourself the COMPETITORS from the VILLAGE [u/i country] and the [UK], a number of problems with the GNOME affair, COOKIE [u/i] and others of the agent network — require your undivided attention [2 groups unrecovered] in all the work. Keep your eyes open and study the situation, use your operational workers more boldly, exercise general control of the Residency, but go to a meeting yourself only in exceptional cases. In this connection [5 groups unrecovered] personal meeting with AMOR and COOKIE, since SEMEN [3 groups unrecovered] on instructions yourself. Establish new personal contacts with the old agent network only with our permission.**
>
> **5. Instruct COOKIE not to meet with KLAVA and expedite the latter's departure to Cuba . . .**

Note especially the final paragraph: agent COOKIE is not to meet with Caridad Mercador, and that old KGB hero is to be hustled out of Mexico. However, per paragraph 4, the GNOME affair is still of interest — but as seen in other messages, best worked without his mother being in Mexico.

But three months later, KLAVA/Caridad Mercader still hadn't left Mexico, as shown by Moscow —> Mexico City, No. 356, 31 May 1945:

> **Transmit the following telegram to KLAVA:**
>
> **I congratulate you on the victory and wish you success and health. Today I received glad news: JORGE is alive and well, he was in a German camp in Germany. Now he has been liberated and feels**
>
> **[23 groups unrecoverable]**

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

Jorge Mercader, the younger son of Caridad Mercader, had been in the Red Army. The signature on this message is unrecovered; the signature to the quoted internal telegram must have been Beria's.

Two late-Venona messages, found on the Moscow —> Mexico City lane, contain instructions from the Center about the security of celebrations in Moscow; [redacted] the 24 June 1945 Victory Parade.[71] While these messages were sent to all KGB Residencies, the recoveries were on this lane. We [redacted] quote the Victory Parade message (fully recovered) as follows:

> **In connection with the Victory Parade on June 24 Comrade PAV[?] gives the following instructions:**
>
> **1. Intensify observation on the activities of White emigre groups, nationalist, Trotskyite, Zionist and ecclesiastical organizations, former members of 'National Legions' and similar formations, and also Mensheviks, Social Revolutionaries, anarchists, cadets and monarchists, and in particular on persons who may be introduced into the USSR on terrorist missions. All information of this matter report by priority telegram.**

[70] The signature was not recovered. The earlier part of the message, not quoted, is poorly recovered. It contains a review of the handling and status of certain agents.

[71] Moscow —> Mexico City, circular, No. 372, 11 June 1945, from VIKTOR; [redacted]



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

**2. See that the issue of entry visas for the USSR to foreigners, with the exception of the diplomatic corps, is stopped from the 15th to the 25th of June. Restrict the issue of permits for them to pass through Moscow in transit.**

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# XIX. THE MEDIA

## A. Introduction

This chapter covers both KGB and GRU sources within the media, which for our purposes will include the press and broadcasting, Hollywood and publishing. The reader should also refer to the earlier chapters on the White House and on Special Operations for additional examples of KGB–connected persons in the media. Venona contains little specific evidence of KGB manipulation of the media, though we see that at least one or two books were planted. However, the KGB had recruited-agents within the media, unwitting sources, and those who fall somewhere in between. The latter group cause some concern in writing a history of Venona. We see people who are sympathetic to the Soviet cause, who are amenable to recruitment and who have been pitched by the KGB. But the end result may not be clear in Venona.

Vladimir Pravdin, covername SERGEJ, the sub or co-Resident in NYC, operated under the cover of chief TASS representative in the U.S. He, and his KGB subordinates assigned to TASS, had significant overt contact with important American journalists and public figures. He sometimes made secret reports to the Center based on what he learned in open meetings with American journalists (and he doesn't claim that the information was secretly obtained).

All the GRU messages appearing in this section fall into that category: a GRU officer under probable TASS cover meets from time to time with a famous military affairs correspondent and reports the results in GRU channels. Both services summarize press and radio reports. The KGB and GRU reports based on openly obtained information were fairly clearly labeled as such, typical of the high standard of reporting seen throughout Venona.

While there are a number of problem cases in the following pages, two involve national figures: I.F. Stone and Walter Lippmann. The KGB pitched Stone and he was amenable, the KGB Residency reported, if a price could be agreed upon. Venona does not tell us how it came out, but one may approach his situation at least with some confidence, and conclude that he had a secret, unreported connection to the KGB. Walter Lippmann had three different covernames in Venona, with 14 mentions found in the traffic. But nowhere do we see tradecraft related to him (except for the covername): no meet schedules, passwords, counter-surveillance. Further, his secretary was a KGB agent who regularly cleaned out his confidential files and passed these along to her handlers.

## B. Some Journalists

Samuel Krafsur, covername IDE (YAZ), an American citizen working for TASS, and a KGB agent, spotted and assessed American journalists. He formally signed on with the KGB sometime after mid–May 1944:

- NY —> Moscow, No.705, 17 May 1944, no signature or address gives NY KGB's assessment of Krafsur:

  **After months of study we propose to use an employee of the Editorial Office [TASS], Samuel KRAFSUR, henceforth IDE, for cultivating newspapermen's circles in CARTHAGE [Washington, DC]. IDE was in the International Brigade in Spain. He is absolutely devoted to the USSR, always zealously carries out minor tasks set by SERGEJ in connection with the obtaining of information. Systematic work among IDE's extensive connections will give opportunities for obtaining valuable information and also of studying**

**individual subjects for signing on.[1] Of the more than 20 leads of IDE's which could be used on the basis of IDE's personal relationships with them the following deserve special attention: B. [name withheld] – personal secretary of the Chairman of the National Committee of the Democratic Party[2]. [redacted] – brother of the well-known journalist [redacted] In the future, if the development of IDE's work requires it, [c% we shall provide] him with an active contact so that information will be received in TYRE [NYC] promptly. We await your sanction.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 789, 1 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, continues the discussion of IDE — the Center must have asked for biographic data about him, and the Residency identified his wife:

**Your number**

**[11 groups unrecoverable]**

**demonstrations of veterans of the Lincoln Brigade. His wife Dixie, nee SCOVILLE, belonged to a wealthy conservative family.**

**[21 groups unrecovered]**

**in those circles.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 998, 15 July 1944, SERGEJ to VIKTOR mentions another contact of IDE's:

**[12 groups unrecovered]**

**in 2–3 weeks. Information received by IDE from the journalist David CARR. [4 groups unrecovered]**

David Carr sometimes worked for Drew Pearson and was later publicly identified as having Communist sympathies and connections.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1178, 17 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, contains IDE's report of off-the-record comments made by Secretary of State Cordell Hull. Note that KGB NY makes no claim for having acquired any of this information in a clandestine way:

**IDE advises that at a press-conference on 17 August LUN [Cordell Hull] made a number of statements off the record. Emphasizing the necessity of the great powers taking part with the small ones in the work of establishing a lasting peace [Hull] roundly condemned various [c% groups] which are striving to isolate the USSR and refuse to allow it to take part in international affairs. 'What you think about the Russians' temperament, customs and manners should play no part in these questions. We have to solve international problems. In the same way the Russians' opinion of us should play no part in it. The methods and system of the USSR may be shocking in questions of its internal policy, however if you try to oust the USSR from the international arena, it will lead to serious consequences.' Pointing out the essentialness of patience in deciding important international problems L. prophesied that great difficulties would arise at the forthcoming**

[1] "Signing on" = the translation of the Russian word KONTRAKTsIYa, a tradecraft term of art. An agent, after being extensively studied, would be formally pitched and signed on.

[2] See Chapter XVII for a discussion of B.

**conferences. 'These difficulties, however, can be overcome if superhuman efforts are applied. The Russians' position is one of the imponderables in these questions. The Russians must be included in the family of nations without regard to the repulsion which is felt towards individual Russian internal questions.'**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1312, 14 September 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, retransmitted a message of the previous day containing more information openly acquired by IDE:

**I repeat the telegram requested:**

**In a talk with IDE a correspondent of the 'Baltimore Sun', [name withheld] completely confirmed what BUMBLEBEE said in regard to the principal aim of KAPITAN's [FDR] meeting with KABAN [Churchill], adding that KAPITAN also intends to discuss the question of India**

**[name withheld] a correspondent of the 'Washington Star' said roughly the same thing to TODD [u/i], an employee of [TASS].**

Covername AKhMED, never identified (and who also had the c/n DROZD), also had access to important American journalists, as described in the following message:

NY —> Moscow, No. 1584, 12 November 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR contains the covernames of two KGB officers, BEK = Sergej N. Kurnakov; NAZAR = Stepan N. Shundenko. Covername CALIPH = William C. Bullitt, an important pre-war diplomat who at the time of this message was associated with 'Life' magazine:

**After thorough consideration of AKhMED's qualities and (in part) of his potentialities, we have come to the conclusion that he is suitable for the role of group leader in the White Line in place of BEK. However, for our proposal to be made with confidence a personal talk with AKhMED himself is absolutely essential. In this talk we should also clarify the all-important questions of AKhMED's potentialities in the First Line (see his communication about KATZ and CALIPH).[3] We have received from BEK a detailed personal description of AKhMED which gives grounds for thinking that the latter is devoted to us and exceedingly capable as a Probationer [agent]. Please give sanction for NAZAR to have a special personal talk with AKhMED for the purpose of deciding in what direction he should be used in the future.**

The preceding two messages contain two other covernames of special interest: BUMBLEBEE and KATZ.

IMPERIALIST, KATZ, BUMBLEBEE = Walter Lippmann

Walter Lippmann appears in 14 Venona messages between June 1943 and May 1945, under three different covernames. Final identification of all three covernames as Lippmann came late in the program — a CIA memo to NSA and the FBI, 24 October 1966. The FBI did not agree with the CIA analysis, because of overlapping covernames in the same time frame. However, the evidence seemed sufficiently compelling and NSA accepted it. In any case, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, no disloyalty is at issue. The KGB considered Lippmann an important source of information and opinion, and undoubtedly believed that he had influence

[3] In some messages, the White Line seems to equate to the media. Here it is apparent that the First Line = journalists/media; while White Line = (probably) White Russians.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36



within the administration. He in turn would readily have appreciated that SERGEJ was not a journalist in the Western sense.[4] A selection of Lippmann messages:

NY —> Moscow, No. 868, 8 June 1943, MAKSIM to VIKTOR is the earliest Lippmann message found in Venona. This could not have been the first message concerning him, nor do we know if IMPERIALIST was his first covername. The message concerns KGB agent covername DIR, Mary Wolfe Price, then personal secretary to Walter Lippmann:

> **[1 group unrecovered] [redacted] DIR [1 group unrecovered] from IMPERIALIST and will go for several months to the COUNTRYSIDE [Mexico] to her brother, who is the representative there of the ship-building firm KAISER, with [or from]**
>
> **[28 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **she is there.**
>
> **It is intended to use DIR's trip for passing on mail to NORA [u/i covername]. DIR will**
>
> **[47 groups unrecovered]**

According to her courier/handler Elizabeth Bentley, Mary Wolfe Price regularly reported to the KGB the contents of Lippmann's confidential files. In the above message, NY reports that Price has taken a break from her arduous double duties of secretary and spy, going to Mexico for R&R.

NY —> Moscow, Nos. 696–697, 16 May 1944, MAJ to the 8th Department, reports the results of a conversation between SERGEJ and Lippmann:

> **In a conversation with SERGEJ, IMPERIALIST said:**
>
> **The General Staff of the [U.S.] has no doubt of the success of the invasion of Europe.[5] Last week [Washington] assured EISENHOWER that there were sufficient trained reserves in the [U.S.] to ensure the reinforcement of the units taking part in the invasion. The [British] have stopped objecting to the invasion. LUN's deputy (henceforth KAPRAL)[6] told IMPERIALIST that [Churchill] had agreed with the invasion plan proposed by the [Americans]. In KAPRAL's words [Churchill] told him: 'For a long time I could not agree to an operation of this kind. However, now despite [3 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **[42 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **is sure that a break will ensure very soon. Concerning Roumania, Bulgaria and Hungary the BANK [State Dept.] supposes that they will break with Germany only after the development of decisive operations on the Western and Eastern Fronts.**

[4] The Venona collection contains a number of FBI and CIA papers relating to the identification of IMPERIALIST, KATZ, BUMBLEBEE. But once these covernames are identified as Lippmann, there is no more analysis or investigative information, suggesting that the Bureau did not consider Lippmann as having a clandestine connection with the KGB. However, FBI reporting to NSA, in support of Venona, is perhaps more restricted in the post-Lamphere era. I have not looked at the Bureau's file on Lippmann.

[5] Which would take place 3 weeks later, on 6 June 1944.

[6] LUN = Secretary of State Cordell Hull; his deputy, KAPRAL = Edward R. Stettinius JR.

**Only in passing did IMPERIALIST touch upon European questions, saying that it was desirable to have a solution of the Soviet–Polish problem before the invasion: 'In return for a change in the Polish Cabinet, MOSCOW ought to renounce L'VOV.[7]**

**IMPERIALIST continues to consider the question of the participation of the USSR in the war against Japan a stumbling block in Soviet – American relations. The master of the DAChA [U.S. Embassy][8] told him that discussion of this question by the press was contrary to the interests of the COUNTRY [U.S.]. IMPERIALIST agrees with him but does not conceal that our future intentions in this matter are considered in responsible circles in the country to be a deciding factor in the policy of the [U.S.].**

**According to IMPERIALIST's report the Americans, by the end of 1944, hope to seize the Philippines, Formosa, Singapore and**

**[190 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

NY —> Moscow, Nos. 847B–848, 15 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, opens with, "SERGEJ reports the following:". The first paragraph reports that statements from "informed journalists", including IMPERIALIST (but four others are named too), indicated that "the question of FRANCE's future is very disturbing", and that "the policy of the USA with regard to FRANCE has been inspired, since 1940, by CALIPH [William Bullitt], [Admiral] LEAHY and [Robert] MURPHY." Sandwiched between 35 and 27 unrecoverable/unrecovered groups are references to U.S. interest in Dakar, Casablanca and Indochina. The remainder of this long message reports information obtained solely from IMPERIALIST:

**According to IMPERIALIST's account LUN [Cordell Hull] and his deputy [Stettinius] are not in agreement with KAPITAN [FDR] and consider that by their policy both the [U.S.] and the [UK] have already practically lost the confidence of the French while conversely our prestige there is growing.[9]IMPERIALIST affirms that the BEAR CUBS [Republicans], as well as military circles and the Navy, are in favor of recognizing [De Gaulle]. Naval chiefs are not demanding the annexation of DAKAR or other bases but want a military alliance which will offer the [U.S.] their use. They also have in mind bases in the Pacific.**

**2. According to IMPERIALIST, the LEAGUE [U.S. government] – contrary to its previous intentions – is not at present supporting the dismemberment of GERMANY although it still regards the award of EAST PRUSSIA to POLAND as essential. The question of the use of German manpower in the USSR and**

**[42 groups unrecoverable]**

**would have paid and fed them.**

[7] Here Lippmann advances a U.S. policy preference — important enough to link to the invasion of France, the matter of highest interest to the Russians. Lippmann often wrote and spoke about Lvov, a city that had been part of the old Polish Kingdom, sometimes German (called Lemberg) and sometimes Russian-connected. It was a place representative of the nationalist and boundary difficulties, then and now, of Eastern and Central Europe. This entire KGB report, based on information from Lippmann, represents high-grade intelligence, but information that the administration would have wanted the Russians to hear.

[8] Master of the DAChA = Ambassador Averill Harriman, here referenced by an institutional rather than a personal covername.

[9] Another reason, if it was true, for the rise in French confidence in the Russians: according to Venona, senior official Pierre Cot and others close to De Gaulle were KGB agents.

**3. As regards the Polish question, [d% some circles] in the [U.S. government] think, according to IMPERIALIST, that the USSR should yield on the LVOV question in return for a change in the composition of the Polish cabinet. IMPERIALIST reinforced this argument with the following observation: 'The LVOV question ought not to be a matter of importance for the USSR since it considers that in any case the MIKOLAJCZYK government would not stay in power and that this would therefore only be a temporary concession which might be rectified in the future.'**

**4. IMPERIALIST says that Wall Street considers the forthcoming monetary conference to be pointless. It is stated in financial circles that the currency of European occupied countries cannot be stabilized at present as the prospects for their economy in the future are not known: consequently stabilization should be limited to the dollar-sterling bloc and the USSR should not be included in the conference as the rouble is stable.**

**5. Considering European questions to be of secondary importance, IMPERIALIST constantly emphasized, as in previous discussions, that it was essential for the USSR to participate in the future in the destruction of JAPAN in order to secure firm friendly relations with the [U.S.]. As regards FINLAND, IMPERIALIST hinted that the breaking off of diplomatic relations would depend on the breaking off by the USSR of relations with BULGARIA. However in a conversation with IDE [KGB agent Samuel Krafsur], [another journalist] affirmed that KAPITAN had finally rejected the proposal by [Cordell Hull] and [General] MARSHALL to break with FINLAND on the grounds that this would be inexpedient before the elections.**

**6. IMPERIALIST is well acquainted with DULLES, one of FIST's [Governor Dewey's] political advisors. DULLES consulted with IMPERIALIST as to how the BEAR CUBS' [Republicans'] position on the question of postwar GERMANY should be set out and included IMPERIALIST's statement of the position in a speech of FIST's in May.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1000, 15 July 1944, SERGEJ to VIKTOR, opens, "IMPERIALIST obtained more specific information from [Stettinius] about what .."; unfortunately most of the rest of the message could not be recovered, though it almost certainly dealt with the Polish question.

NY —> Moscow, No. 1289, 9 September 1944, to VIKTOR, signature not recovered, uses the covername BUMBLEBEE for Lippmann. Most of the message was unrecovered but the opening is interesting and confirms a regular arrangement between Lippmann and SERGEJ:

**In his usual talk with SERGEJ, BUMBLEBEE said that KABAN's [Churchill's] vacillations in his relations with KAPITAN were caused by unresolved contradictions on questions of the future of Germany and the participation of the [UK} in the operation**

**[345 groups unrecoverable/unrecovered]**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1507, 23 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, summarizes some information from SERGEJ about new appointments to high level positions in the War Department and the post-war administration of Germany. BUMBLEBEE/Lippmann is mentioned as one of several sources.

NY —> Moscow, No. 1515, 25 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, changes Lippmann's covername to KATZ. Curiously, NY makes the change from IMPERIALIST to KATZ, skipping the presumed intervening

covername BUMBLEBEE, and later goes back to BUMBLEBEE. The difficulties in this were resolved to the satisfaction of CIA and NSA, but not to the FBI.[10] The message:

> **According to a summary of AKhMED [u/i covername][11] we are passing on IMPERIALIST's (henceforth KATZ) opinion about CALIPH's [William Bullitt] articles which were printed in the magazine 'Fortune':**
>
> **1. The USSR is playing a private**
>
> **[36 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**
>
> **has other plans. It may be a question of rapprochement with Germany for which the USSR has more opportunities than the Allies. If the Allies attempt to lean on the German anti-fascists, the latter will not cope with the powerful and organized fascist underground; the USSR is better prepared, since if necessary she can liquidate the fascist underground at the hands of the Germans themselves; it is for precisely this reason that the USSR is carrying on the business with the captured generals. The Allies are deprived of such an possibility.**
>
> **[10 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **2. There is no reason to fear that the USSR will attempt to nationalize Europe [10 groups unrecovered] 'in the style of a great power'.**
>
> **3. The recent conference near [Washington] despite frictions and [3 groups unrecovered], bears witness to the absence of irreconcilable contradictions between the Big Three, this opinion being shared by KATZ's close friend [Lord?] CADOGAN.**
>
> **4. Before all we must give up 'our (that is to say, American) idiotic position**
>
> **[65 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **magazine. It is necessary so that AKhMED's information**
>
> **[13 ? groups unrecovered]**
>
> **about KATZ.**
>
> **KATZ considers CALIPH's article outrageous, untalented and harmful. By air-mail is being sent a number [of observations] by AKhMED on the reactions of the [U.S.] to CALIPH's article which in summary form may be of interest to the [Center ?].[12]**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1805, 23 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, summarizes the views of four journalists concerning the German offensive in the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge). The covername BUMBLEBEE reappears in this message, quoted in part below:

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[10] The best way to look at this question seems to be context. Surely IMPERIALIST = Lippmann, because of the content and the connection to covername DIR, his secretary Mary W. Price. Then, the KGB changes IMPERIALIST to KATZ, confirming a second covername. The context strongly suggests that BUMBLEBEE too must be Lippmann. The covername KATZ must have been dropped, probably at Moscow's suggestion, because it was the truename of one of NY's most important agent-officers, Joseph "Jack" Katz.

[11] Though he is unidentified, we know that AKhMED was a KGB agent rather than an officer, a matter of some interest. For had he been an officer, it would merely have been another example of the KGB using the legal cover of TASS to talk to Lippmann. Instead we have a KGB agent in his circle — and we recall that his secretary was also a KGB agent.

[12] This translation was issued in January 1954 and never formally reissued, though it would seem to have had some high CI potential.

*XIX. THE MEDIA*

> **BUMBLEBEE had a chat with the head of the ARSENAL [War Department][13]who told him that if the Germans seize LEIGE and the adjacent [d% areas] on the front it will take a further 3–4 months to reorganize the American offensive and [d% longer] to make good the stocks of military equipment now concentrated in this area. BUMBLEBEE was recently in France for a month and there concluded from a chat with EISENHOWER that the American plan provides for a break-through onto the left bank of the RHINE in the middle of January. At this period the Americans were counting on our offensive in Poland primarily in the direction of CRACOW.[14]**

NY —> Moscow, Nos. 1814–1815, 23 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR contains the views of a number of journalists about the Polish question. BUMBLEBEE commented on the significance of the "unwillingness of the Catholics, who under the pressure of the Vatican's propaganda are categorically opposing any policy of participation with the USSR."

BLIN = I.F. Stone

The FBI identified covername BLIN (PANCAKE) as I.F. Stone, a well-known journalist who generally followed the Soviet line.[15] In later years he acquired a considerable reputation as an indefatigable researcher and reliable source of information on the workings of the Congress and the Executive Branch. But for much of his career he was essentially an apologist for Stalin and his successors (one of his books, which for some reason gained respect, had as its theme that South Korea, in league with the U.S., started the Korean War). As with Lippmann, there is an inconsistency: the first recovered mention of the covername BLIN occurs in a message of 13 September 1944, but a message of 10 October 1944 gives the truename I. STONE, instead of the covername. Two mentions of BLIN follow in later messages, but the truename does not reappear. This will be tentatively explained and discussed in the following. Covername SERGEJ is again seen using his TASS cover to assess BLIN/I.F.Stone.

NY —> Moscow, No. 1313, 13 September 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR contains two internal messages, the first of which is quoted as follows:

> **Your number 4247 [not available]. SERGEJ has three times attempted to effect liaison with BLIN in CARTHAGE [Washington, DC] in the line of cover[16][c% but] each time BLIN declined [c% on the grounds of] being busy with trips. IDE has carefully attempted to sound him, but B. did not react. B. occupies a very prominent position in the journalistic world and has vast connections. To determine precisely his relations to us we will commission ECHO to make a check.**

So, KGB officer Pravdin (SERGEJ) had tried to sound out BLIN, as had KGB agent Samuel Krafsur (IDE), a TASS employee. Finally, MAJ was going to have his investigator, Bernie Schuster (ECHO), make some checks on BLIN. From other messages we know this would have at least meant finding out if BLIN was a member of the Communist Party and interviewing Party members about him.

---

[13] That is, Secretary of War Stimson.

[14] Apparently Lippmann was in Europe and met with Eisenhower as stated.

[15] At the time of the Venona traffic, Stone wrote for "The Nation" and "PM".

[16] That is, as the TASS representative.

NY —> Moscow, Nos. 1433–1435, 10 October 1944, from MAJ (address not found) is a long message quoted earlier in the study: the dispute between SERGEJ and MAJ. Following is the first recovered part of the message and some other relevant passages. In this message the KGB used the truename Stone :

**[49 groups unrecoverable]**

**SERGEJ has brought in IDE but is not able to direct his work systematically as he sees him too rarely. Among SERGEJ's acquaintances are persons of great interest from a legal point of view. They are well informed and, although they do not say all they know, nevertheless they provide useful comments of the foreign policy of the [U.S.]. Among them SERGEJ is studying Joseph BARNES and I. STONE.**

Note the phrase, "persons of great interest from a legal point of view", which means people who could be used legally, that is, without being recruited, or, alternatively, people who could be openly contacted for clandestine purposes because of the logical TASS cover. Part of this message, including that just quoted, is probably taken from a note or report that SERGEJ had written. It may be a direct quote of that note. This could explain why the truename Stone was used: SERGEJ either did not know the communications covername that had been assigned to I.F. Stone (BLIN), or he did not use it in his note (i.e. the covernames were communications names, not necessarily terms that would have been used in intra-office notes). When quoting or summarizing the note to put in the message, MAJ must have forgotten to make the conversion to the covername. Joseph Barnes, a well-known columnist, had been a Soviet sympathizer and apologist who had visited the Soviet Union in the 1930s, reportedly telling a friend that the Purges were appropriate.

In a later part of this message that is headed "MAJ's opinion", MAJ included the following comment: "The signing up of BARNES is obviously not only inadvisable but unrealizable; however, it is desirable to use him without signing him up." But MAJ does not comment on Stone, one way or the other. But if Stone was considered to be in the same category as Barnes, we can assume MAJ would have said so.

NY —> Moscow, No. 1506, 23 October 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR is the key BLIN/Stone message that has been recovered. Quoted in full:

**SERGEJ in CARTHAGE [Washington] has made the acquaintance of BLIN. Earlier SERGEJ had several times tried to [b% contact] him personally and also through IDE but the impression had been created that BLIN was avoiding a meeting. At the first conversation SERGEJ told him that he had very much desired to make his acquaintance since he greatly valued his work as a correspondent and had likewise heard flattering**

**[23 groups unrecoverable]**

**BLIN to give us information. B. said that he had noticed our attempts to [b% contact] him, particularly the attempts of IDE and of people of the TRUST [Soviet Embassy], but he had reacted negatively fearing the consequences. At the same time he implied that the attempts at rapprochement had been made with insufficient caution and by people who were insufficiently responsible. To SERGEJ's reply that naturally we did not want to subject him to unpleasant complications, BLIN gave him to understand that he was not refusing his aid but [b% one should] consider that he had three children and did not want to attract the attention of the KhATA [FBI]. To SERGEJ's question how he considered it advisable to maintain liaison B. replied that he would be glad to meet but he rarely visited [b% TYRE; i.e. NYC] where he usually spent**

**[54 groups unrecoverable].**

**His fear is primarily explained by his unwillingness to spoil his career. Materially he is well secured. He earns as much as 1500 dollars a month but, it seems, he would not be averse to having a supplementary income. For the establishment of business contact with him we are insisting on [1 group unrecovered] reciprocity. For the work is needed a qualified [2 groups unrecovered] CARTHAGE. Telegraph your opinion.**

According to the FBI the personal information in this message clinched the identity and the same could be said by connecting the first two messages to the first paragraph of this message: in the first message BLIN was declining to meet SERGEJ and IDE wasn't having any luck making the connection either; in the second message "I. STONE" was avoiding SERGEJ. In the third message we read that SERGEJ had tried several times to make the acquaintance of BLIN who said he had indeed been avoiding SERGEJ, IDE and people from the embassy. The identification really is not in doubt.

From the Venona standpoint the doubt concerns what happened next.[17] BLIN was found in VENONA only one other time, in NY —> Moscow no. 1805, 23 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, quoted in part in the section on Walter Lippmann. In that message the reference to BLIN is rather routine, that is, BLIN's information is lumped in with that of others:

**Correspondents who have contacts with the military leaders – BUMBLEBEE [Lippmann], BLIN, and ShEF[18] in a conversation with SERGEJ maintained that the General Staff of the COUNTRY [U.S.] is very much alarmed at the German offensive which may delay for several months the renewal of the American general offensive which is calculated to crush Germany in concert with us. BUMBLEBEE had a chat with the head of the ARSENAL ..**

**[etc, the rest is quoted in the Lippmann section, rlb]**

BLIN/I.F. Stone's absence from later Venona isn't surprising. As BLIN himself had said, he didn't get to NYC very often, and SERGEJ had asked the Center, in that same message, "For the work is needed a qualified (2 groups unrecovered) CARTHAGE." Undoubtedly the KGB Residency in Washington took over the handling of BLIN, an action consistent with BLIN's and SERGEJ's comments and, in the larger sense, one consistent with the change in KGB agent handling and reporting in 1945. Up til 1945, most of the KGB reporting had been by the NY Residency regardless of the location of the agent sources. Washington KGB took over most of the reporting in 1945, but unfortunately only about 1% of the traffic can be read. We can safely assume that BLIN appeared in that unreadable traffic.

YuN and PA : KGB Interest in Prominent Correspondents for National Magazines

The FBI identified covername YuN as Stephen Laird, aka: Laird Lichtenvalner, who had written for Time, Life, Newsweek, worked for CBS, and had connections to the film industry. The covername has been found six times in the Venona traffic.

[17] A retired KGB officer has reportedly said that I.F. Stone was in the pay of the KGB for more than 20 years, until the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. See the Accuracy in Media (AIM) report of July 1992.

[18] ShEF (CHIEF) = u/i covername for an American journalist in touch with the KGB.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 851, 15 June 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, is the first recovered use of the covername. It is found in a short internal message about agent handling:

> **Your No. 2547 [not available]. YuN has not yet been turned over to SHAH. We will remind MAKSIM of your instructions.**

Covername SHAH [ShAKh in the Russian] = KGB officer Constantine A. Shabanov, and MAKSIM = Vassilij Zubilin, then the Resident in Washington. Zubilin handled a number of sources connected to the media/entertainment business, on the West Coast and in the East (e.g. Boris Morros).

NY —> Moscow, No. 928, 1 July 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, also concerns agent handling and hand-overs (only the final internal message is quoted):

> **Your No. 2831. We have already informed you that the task concerning CHARLIE has been passed on to MER. [5 groups unrecovered] [d % SHAH] [1 group unrecovered] YuN and [5 groups unrecovered] ATAMAN has been turned over to SELIM KHAN.**

The SHAH – YuN reference probably stands alone and gives the status of the hand-over.[19]

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1136, 8 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, provided information useful to identifying YuN, and contains information that he probably provided:

> **On 4th August, correspondent METCALF confidentially communicated from CARTHAGE [Washington DC] to the editorial office of YuN's journal[20] that Paul CULBERTSON, chief of the Western European Division of the BANK [State Dept.], who recently returned from a secret mission to Lisbon confidentially told METCALF [1 group missing] of the URBANITES [Americans] in PORTUGAL concerning the giving of military bases in the Azores to the COUNTRY [U.S.]. It is probable that the COUNTRY will receive these bases. The COUNTRY is also interested in the utilization of 1 base but negotiations have not yet begun.[21] The [UK] does not openly object to [1 group missing] [d% about] military bases but objects very much to a commercial base.**

NY —> Moscow, No. 1154, 12 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, gives a good assessment of YuN and would also have helped the FBI make the identification:

> **[c% Your instructions to SHAH to review again] [YuN?]. YuN gives the impression of a politically well-developed person who wishes to help us.[22] However, he considers his potentialities to be limited, for he deals only with technical work on the magazine. He can pass on correspondents' telegrams but we receive them from other sources. Using his connections among journalists and studying the magazine's materials he could draw up political reports for us but he lacks the perseverance for that. Besides, [4 groups unrecoverable] breakup [d% with] his wife. YuN declares that he is used to reporters' work and would like to go abroad again, but the owner of the magazine will not send him because he disapproves of his radical views. The other day the film company RKO took**

[19] The other covernames: CHARLIE = u/i; MER = the illegal Akhmerov; ATAMAN = KGB agent Boleslaw Gebert, who reported on Polish exile matters; SELIM KHAN = u/i, but probably a KGB officer.

[20] That is, Time magazine.

[21] In the light of what follows, this reference must be to a commercial base (trade office?).

[22] "politically well developed" = a KGB formula expression for a committed Communist.

**him [d% on] as a film producer, which he succeeded in getting thanks to social connections in actor and producer circles. According to YuN's words, VARDO [c% in her time] did not object to such a maneuver and [c% afterwards] it[23] may give him an opportunity to make trips to Europe and do work useful to us. In the middle of September YuN is moving to HOLLYWOOD. We consider it expedient to continue liaison [c% with him] in HOLLYWOOD. Telegraph whether a new password should be agreed upon.**

YuN's connection to covername VARDO is interesting. VARDO was Elizabeth Zubilin, a senior KGB officer and wife of the sometime New York, and at the time of this message, the Washington Resident, Vassilij Zubilin. VARDO/Elizabeth helped her husband handle Boros Morros on both coasts, before and again during the Venona period. The Morros operation, discussed later in this chapter, originated in Hollywood, so YuN's statement that connects Elizabeth Zubilin to his opportunities in the film industry is on target.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1198, 23 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, is a good Venona tradecraft message (and it is completely recovered):

**Your 3758.**

**YuN is going to HOLLYWOOD 20 September of this year. He proposes to stay at BEVERLY HILLS Hotel. Approximately 1 October in the morning DAR should telephone him, saying;**

**This is Helen's uncle.**

**YuN : How is Helen?**

**DAR : She is still in Halloran Hospital.**

**After that they will arrange a meeting. In YuN does not succeed in getting a room in the hotel indicated he must be called at RKO Studios.**

DAR (GIFT) = Grigorij Kasparov, sometime KGB Resident in San Francisco, who soon departed for Mexico City to pick up the pieces there.

At that point YuN must have fallen under the control of the San Francisco Residency, the originator of the last YuN message that has been found in Venona:

• San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 433, 11 August 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR does not tell us much. Note that MAJ is now the San Francisco signatory. The Center had transferred him from NY to San Francisco to cover the UN Conference being held in the latter city:

**Advise your opinion regarding the use of YuN by 14th August.**

Two KGB messages concern covername PA, another person connected to Time magazine. Unfortunately, we don't know — at least from the traffic — how the KGB fared with PA. Comments follow the second message:

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1754, 14 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR. This message was 100% recovered:

**According to ABRAM's advice an employee of TIME, Inc., Richard LAUTERBACH, a concealed FELLOW COUNTRYMAN [C.P. member], has returned here from the USSR. They proposed to him that he write a series of anti-Soviet articles, but he refused declaring**

[23] Or "she" instead of "it"

**that if they insisted he would resign. ABRAM recommends drawing him in. SERGEJ has set about studying LAUTERBACH (henceforth PA). Please rush a check and telegraph your opinion.**

- NY —> Moscow No. 20, 4 January 1945, to VIKTOR (signature unrecovered):

**Please expedite and telegraph your instructions about PA as he may be leaving. SERGEJ for the time being**

**[31 groups unrecoverable]**

Lauterbach (who died in 1950) was chief of the Time-Life staff in Moscow 1943–44, and later worked for the New York Star. Whittaker Chambers told the FBI that Lauterbach was a concealed C.P. member. Chambers also recalled an incident shortly after Lauterbach returned from Moscow that appears to be the one described in the first message (his refusal to write an anti-Soviet article). Lauterbach wrote two books on the Soviet Union, the first of which, These Are the Russians, received a favorable review in the Daily Worker, which contrasted his book to the anti-Soviet book written by William L. White, who had been in the Soviet Union at the same time as Lauterbach.

Covername ABRAM in the first message = KGB net controller Jack Soble. One might have expected that Lauterbach would already have been pitched by the KGB while in Moscow, but we do not have the Center's reply to NY's request for a file check and approval to recruit.

C. The KGB Runs a Record and Music Company in Hollywood

Four Venona messages concern the operations of KGB agent FROST, who was the Hollywood personality Boris Morros, aka: Moroz, whose last name means "frost" in Russian.[24] While these four messages are long and well-recovered, they do not, standing alone, make a lot of sense given our knowledge of other KGB operations. That is, too much money is involved. The explanation depends on what FROST/Morros told the FBI in July 1947, when he became a double agent working against the KGB. Morros subsequently described his KGB career, and his time as a double agent, in the book, My Ten Years as a Counterspy. Venona provides an interesting check on some of what Morros told the Bureau and what he put in his book.

The FBI had known about Morros since 1943 at least, as he was one of only two KGB agents named in the Anonymous Letter of 1943 (described in Chapter II).[25] It will be recalled that the Anonymous Letter (written in Russian by a KGB or GRU person) named all the senior KGB officers in the U.S. — Vassilij and Elizabeth Zubilin, Grigorij Kheifits, Kvasnikov (head of technical targets collection) and more. The letter, the text of which appears in the Appendices, said the following about Morros (the quotation is from the middle of the letter):

*His [Vasilij Zubilin's] closest assistants are:*

*1. His wife, directs political intelligence here, has a vast network of agents in almost all departments including the State Department. She sends false information to the [KGB] and everything of value passes on to the Germans through a certain Boriz MOROZ (HOLLYWOOD). Put her under observation and you will quickly uncover the whole of her network.*

As mentioned in Chapter II, the anonymous author had filled the letter with preposterous charges that all the KGB officers in the U.S. were feeding classified U.S. information to the Japanese and Germans. The best

[24] The covername FROST appeared just that way in the traffic — as a spelled-out English language word.

[25] Earl Browder was the other one named.

guess is that the author believed that he had to mention the Axis powers to get anyone in Washington to pay attention to his letter. In any event Boris Morros had the distinction of being listed among the senior group of KGB officers who were running espionage operations in the U.S. and Mexico.[26]

The KGB Career of Boris Morros

This section sets the stage for the Venona material presented in the next sections and is based largely on Morros' book, My Ten Years as a Counterspy.[27]

Morros (b. 1895) left the Soviet Union in 1923. He had been a musical prodigy (cellist) and had performed for the Imperial Family, which, he wrote, made it risky to stay in Russia. He continued his musical career in NYC, eventually becoming musical director for Paramount Pictures and later a film producer under his own company name.

In the early 1930s, a representative of Leon Trotsky contacted him with the proposal that Morros book Trotsky as a speaker in the U.S. Before he could turn down this commercially doubtful venture, he was approached by a Soviet representative (KGB or GRU) who asked him not to put Trotsky on the stage. In exchange he received a paid trip back to Russia to see his family, and as a bonus, his father was allowed to visit him in the U.S.

In 1935, Morros moved to Hollywood and that same year he was approached by a Russian using the name Edward Herbert, who asked for a position as Morros' musical talent scout in Germany. Herbert made it clear that this was a KGB intelligence operation to penetrate Nazi Germany. Morros gave Herbert a letter on Paramount stationary and in turn received money which he was to use to send monthly checks to Herbert. The KGB was not satisfied with Morros' backstopping and in 1937 he received an admonitory visit from Stanislaus Shumovsky,[28] who identified himself as an aeronautical engineer attached to the Soviet embassy. We recall that Shumovsky (found in Venona as covername BLERIOT) was the senior KGB officer who had recruited Jones O. York, an agent later handled by KGB agent Bill Weisband, see Chapter VII., a member of ASA/AFSA overseas and at Arlington Hall, 1943–50.

In 1940, Herbert himself reappeared in Hollywood, complaining that Morros' indifferent performance had put him at risk while he had been operating in Germany. Herbert told Morros that he was in fact Vassilij Zubilin, now a member of the staff of the Soviet Embassy. Zubilin/Herbert would soon become the KGB Resident in NYC, and then in Washington, frequently appearing in KGB traffic as covername MAKSIM. Morros later met Elizabeth Zubilin, found in Venona as covername VARDO.[29]

From 1942 on, Morros came in contact with many KGB personalities found in Venona: Jack Soble (covername ABRAM), his nephew Elliott (Ilya) Wolston (covername SLAVA), Jane Foster Zlatovsky

[26] Morros himself would look like a good suspect in the attempt to identify the letter writer — he was a great self promoter and probably wanted to break with the KGB. However, he could not have named all those officers (unless his true role has been misunderstood). Morros was definitely the subject of an FBI investigation by 1944 (the CONRAP case).

[27] I have not reviewed the FBI main-file on Morros — which probably runs to hundreds of volumes. The Venona collection contains no Bureau reports on Morros, an extremely curious omission, suggesting that the Bureau verbally told NSA that he was a double agent; or told NSA nothing. The earliest Venona translations of FROST messages identify the covername FROST as Morros (but without collateral backup).

[28] Called Edward Shumovsky in the book.

[29] Elizabeth Zubilin/VARDO had the task of assessing and recruiting Eleanor Roosevelt (see the White House chapter). Morros described her as fragile, pretty and aristocratic — the brains behind Vassilij Zubilin — and one held in awe by many American Communists, who, wrote Morros, considered her a Red Joan of Arc. Morros described Vassilij Zubilin as athletic, a good tennis player, stupid, a drunk, and a thug who went about armed.

(covername SLANG), and especially with Alfred K. Stern (covername LUI) and his wife Martha Dodd Stern (covername LIZA). Alfred Stern had first been married to Marian Rosenwald, daughter of Julius Rosenwald, the chief executive of Sears, Roebuck. Martha Dodd, his second wife, was the daughter of Professor William E. Dodd, who had been U.S. Ambassador to Germany during the mid–30s. Martha Dodd had first been pro-Nazi and was later recruited by the KGB. Her brother, William E. Dodd Jr. may be KGB covername SITsILLA found in one Venona message.[30]

In December 1943, Zubilin took Morros to visit the Sterns at their country house in Connecticut to discuss another KGB cover plan. At Zubilin's direction, Stern put up $130,000 of his own money to finance a front company that would be run by Morros and Stern — the Boris Morros Company of Los Angeles. Stern put $100,000 in the company and $30,000 in an account in NYC for salaries and expenses of agents. Zubilin's plan expanded upon the one he and Morros had used in the mid–30s. According to Morros' account:

> *[Zubilin] added that the placement of his men would be completely in Stern's hands. These could cover themselves by working as song pluggers or as scouts for popular singers and bands, by contacting foreign music publishers with the idea of buying American rights to their songs and selling Spanish and Portuguese rights to our hit numbers.*

The KGB, through a financial angel, had gotten into the phonograph record business. Apparently the legitimate part of the business prospered for a time; the clandestine part — at least from Morros' public account — did not do so well. By late 1944, the whole enterprise was in doubt as we learn from the Venona messages.

"The Whole Business is Doomed to Failure"

NY —> Moscow, No. 1824, 27 December 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, contains a short internal message about the record business and gives four covernames:

- ALBERT = the KGB Illegal Resident, Isklak Akhmerov.
- LUI = Alfred K. Stern
- SKRIB = probably another covername for Ilya Wolston, formerly or also covername SLAVA, Jack Soble's nephew, who was in Military Intelligence in Alaska (see Chapter XVI).[31]
- FROST = Boris Morros

The message:

> **1. ALBERT sent a confidential memorandum from LUI which was handed over to ALBERT through FROST's wife.[32] LUI is complaining about FROST and emphasizes that unless prompt drastic measures of reorganization are taken the whole business is doomed to failure. To the memorandum are attached a series of corroborating documents.**

[30] In NY —> Moscow, No. 748, 26 May 1944, MAJ asked VIKTOR to sanction "as an exceptional case" the employment of SITsILLA in the TASS News Agency for a two week period. MAJ told the Center that SITsILLA had worked for the U.S. Office of War Information and had previously supplied information to the KGB. The FBI believed this and other information pointed to Dodd.

[31] However, SKRIB might also be one of SLAVA's recruits, e.g. Dvoichenko–Markov, seen in 1943 traffic as covername HOOK, who was also on MI duty in Alaska.

[32] Meaning perhaps that Boris Morros' wife was reporting on him.

**Advise whether to telegraph the contents of the memorandum in more detail and what instructions to give ALBERT. Take into account that I am not abreast of the scheme.**[33]

**2. FROST received a letter from SKRIB from ALASKA in which he says 'Ivory is cheap, if you want to take it I can get it.' In FROST's opinion this means that SKRIB is ready to work if we want. Telegraph instructions.**

Venona contains three multi-part messages dated 3–4 January 1945, that transmit reports from Stern (LUI). Other messages on this subject, known to have been sent around that time, have not been recovered.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 4, 5; 3 January 1945, from MAJ, was a three-part message. Parts II and III were recovered; most of what follows is MAJ quoting from a memo prepared by Stern (who is the "I" in the message:)

**When I directed our friends' attention to particular examples they always reassured me saying that everything would turn out all right if I would be patient ...**

**Before the departure in July of V. and his wife**[34] **they said that after their return they would get in touch with us [1 group unrecovered] and that until that time we should not make any attempt to establish contact [4 groups unrecovered]. In accordance with their advice we waited.**

**Much time has elapsed since their return and the business is in an extremely critical state. One of the reasons for the crisis is that my partner [Morros] doesn't want to listen to business advice. He**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**Hollywood. Being in a position in [d% the company where he can make his voice heard and] not having any idea [7 groups unrecovered] I cannot supervise [9 groups unrecovered]. If my partner will not**

**[72 groups unrecoverable/unrecovered]**

**turned over to him in its entirety and was greatly disappointed when recently all this went to another music company.**

**He knows that on the present operational basis I do not intend to put in any additional money ... I want to emphasize that money alone cannot solve his personal and other problems ... I am convinced that unless a reorganization is carried out quickly we will not give what is expected of us.**

**I want to reaffirm my desire to be helpful. My resources are sufficient for any solid constructive business but I don't intend to maintain silence when my resources, time and efforts are being spent for nothing ...'**

**The most important of the remaining memoranda we will telegraph by way of supplement. [This last sentence is MAJ's, rlb]**

[33] MAJ, the Resident, is saying he does not know what the operation is about, yet he is the signatory to the messages transmitting details of same. As we have seen, ALBERT sometimes signed his own messages. Practical difficulties of secure communication and operational support made it impractical for ALBERT to operate completely independent of MAJ (and other messages – see the Tradecraft chapters – show that complete independence was never intended).

[34] "V. and his wife" must mean Vassilij and Elizabeth Zubilin.

- NY —> Moscow, No. 11, 4 January 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR, continues the story and adds new players:
- VARDO = Elizabeth Zubilin, KGB officer.
- ELSA = Helen Lowry, KGB agent and wife of the illegal KGB Resident ALBERT and niece of C.P. chief Earl Browder.
- RULEVOJ = C.P. chairman Earl Browder, a KGB agent.

The message:

> **LUI's memorandum which we passed to you in number 2 was dated 22 December. We have now received a letter of 15 November of LUI's addressed to VARDO which he passed to ELSA via RULEVOJ's brother's wife. We are transmitting extracts:**
>
> **'The business, in which we all had great hopes, has reached the stage when immediate intervention on an authoritative level is required .... the 130,000 dollar investment is exhausted; in view of the poor business management and misguided artistic temperament unsuitable for conducting a very systematic business this sum is not enough, which allows one to envision future prospects as very dubious in this case. Unless steps are taken to control this business or a man is found who as an experienced production manager would show farsightedness and impart stability to the business it ... will be almost or wholly useless for our purposes .... my partner ignores my advice; my endeavors lead almost or completely to nothing and even evoke disdain .... of course relations between myself and my partner remain cordial and this criticism does not affect his devotion and political stability .... my partner**
>
> **[38 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **business .... in order to look objectively at our past mistakes, our present position and plans for the future ....'**

NY —> Moscow, No. 18–19, 4 January 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR, completes the Venona story of the Morros–Stern partnership. Here MAJ summarizes:

> **Further to No. 2. Here is the gist of the enclosure to LUI's memorandum:**
>
> **1. In 'Memorandum on Conversations' LUI sets out the reactions to FROST of various persons with whom he and FROST came in contact. Opinions agree that FROST is not running the business competently, that he makes many empty promises, that he does not listen to advice and that he over-estimates his capabilities.**
>
> **2. In 'Summary Report' LUI reports about the various steps in the development of the company and FROST's mistakes which were connected with them. He considers it necessary soon to reorganize the company by setting up the following departments (in order of importance):**
>
> **1. Production**
>
> **2. Selection of music to publish, of the artists and the gramophone recordings.**
>
> **3. Promotion.**
>
> **4. Distribution.**

**Except for FROST, LUIS considers that none of the present personnel is adequate to deal with the tasks which confront each of these departments. In his opinion FROST should concentrate his attention on the problems of the second department; LUI himself, not knowing the technology of production, undertakes to head distribution. For promoting the products, ability of high order is required. At present the company is failing to deal with the problem of production and this means that business is at a standstill. In this area is needed a specialist who could surround himself with experienced sound recorders, chemists and machine experts and who would know the market.**

**He and 4 qualified workers could solve the personnel problem. He**

**[68 groups unrecoverable]**

**Chronological Report for 1944' LUI describes the activities of the company. Magazine clippings and copies of postal and telegraphic correspondence on company business.**

D. Other KGB Activities in Hollywood

Exploitable KGB traffic says rather little about KGB operations within the film industry. Two factors need to be considered. Los Angeles/Hollywood KGB and GRU traffic is unreadable, though in any case not high volume, a matter discussed in some detail in the next chapter. Second, the loyalty issue in Hollywood mostly involved the Communist Party, that is, devotion to the Communist line and the Soviet Union, but not directly, or at least not obviously, to the KGB. The best sources for all this are the various Congressional hearings of the late 1940s and early 1950s. A few items from Venona follow.

Covername IVERI in Hollywood

KGB agent Mikhail Konstantinovich Kalatozov, covername IVERI, represented the Soviet film industry in the U.S. Venona messages concerning him describe a scandal while he was in Hollywood, and also indicate that he had a direct line to Beria.

• San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 467, 5 November 1943, KhARON to PETROV, by the mere address suggests IVERI's importance for PETROV = Beria, who was rarely addressed directly. Signatory KhARON = Grigorij Kheifets, KGB Resident in SF. The message:

**IVERI is leaving for TYRE [NYC] on 8th November and asks that TYRE be informed direct what position he is to adopt regarding SIMONENKO's proposal for organizing a joint-stock company (see our no. 230).**[35]

• San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 510, 7 December 1943, from KhARON, addressed "Personal to PETROV [Beria]", reports a local scandal. JULIA = Olga Valentinovna Khlopkova, the busy KGB personality involved in internal security, courier duty, cipher work and more in S.F., Los Angeles and New York:

**JULIA has insisted that I should inform you by telegraph that IVERI's relationships may become a subject for discussion since IVERI's suspicions about his wife's connections with G. [name withheld] are being confirmed by ZARE.**[36] **ZARE [c% in the course] [3 groups unrecovered] IVERI's wife's intimate relations with G. and the subsequent [1 group**

[35] No. 230, the internal KGB message # = external 419 of 16 October 1943, available but not published by NSA/GCHQ because of limited recovery.

[36] ZARE = KGB officer Elena Gorbunova.

**unrecovered] IVERI [6 groups unrecovered] scandal that IVERI in his reports to you makes his wishes out to be facts [1 group unrecovered] and [3 groups unrecovered] you. By post we are sending a detailed letter of ZARE's on this case.**

• San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 519, Personal to PETROV from KhARON, is poorly recovered, but it continues the story of the scandal:

**From a chat with ZARE and JULIA I conclude:**

**1. ZARE suspects IVERI's wife of [2 groups unrecovered] with G. The relations of IVERI's wife with G. [2 groups unrecovered] at G.'s apartment [3 groups unrecovered] IVERI lived upon arrival.**

**2. The close relations of IVERI's wife with BEN are known to ZARE from IVERI's wife. ZARE personally saw G. in [4 groups unrecovered] IVERI's wife.**

**3. BEN**

**[22 groups unrecovered]**

**mutual relations of IVERI and ZARE [7 groups unrecovered] with ZARE and JULIA.**

**[32 groups unrecovered]**

• San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 27, 17 January 1944, from KhARON, no address found, mentions IVERI's friendship with the American, K. [name withheld], who had been working on an English to Russian film translation. The last part of the message, preceded by 8 unrecovered groups is intriguing:

**roles at the present time are the secret temptation of IVERI. IVERI is writing to PETROV [Beria] in detail about the matter.**

• San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 29, 17 January 1944, again addressed from KhARON to PETROV, concerns a re-defection:

**IVERI says that from personal conversations with the well-known artist ChEKhOV he has formed the impression that ChEKhOV would be glad to accept a proposal that he should return home. IVERI [6 groups unrecovered] ChEKhOV and our acceleration in the return of ChEKhOV home. IVERI [3 groups unrecovered] consent of BOL'SHAKOV [1 group unrecovered] with 'R.K.O.'**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 776, 31 May 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR contains a very minor reference to IVERI : does the Center want the "material handed in by IVERI containing studies of some motion picture firms and workers in the film arts, 11 pages"?

• In San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 268, 21 June 1944, to VIKTOR, the new Resident DAR (Grigorij Kasparov) tells the Center that, "I took over IVERI", that is, he would be the latter's handler.

Hollywood Miscellaneous

Four KGB San Francisco messages, December 1943 – May 1944, concerned two people in the technical side of one of the major studios, names of both withheld, hereafter L. and G. The messages are poorly recovered, extracts from the first message of this group quoted as follows:

**Through the Vice-Consul in LOS ANGELES, PILIPENKO .... was/were received from L., manager of the studio laboratory ..... Advise whether these materials interest you and whether it is necessary to send them to you by post. From L. one can also get the formula ... for developing a colored motion picture and other information of the technique of processing films. Advise whether it is worth engaging in [4 groups unrecovered].**[37]

In San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 32, 17 January 1944, KhARON assesses L. and introduces G. L. is described as being in his late 50s, and that he had somehow been connected to the 1905 Black Sea naval mutiny in which revolutionary sailors seized control of a number of Czarist ships. The Soviet Vice-Consul had described L. to KhARON as, "a serious and unselfish man." The message concluded that G., another "serious" person, was a friend and co-worker of L. KhARON asked the Center for a file check on these two.

In San Francisco —> Moscow, numbers 204 and 223 of 11 May and 22 May 1944, respectively, KhARON reported the results of his interview of G. (biographic data — text poorly recovered) and advised the Center that he had received a "favorable character report" concerning him.[38]

"Please Check PLATON"

NY —> Moscow, Nos. 1132, 1133, 13 July 1943, LUKA[39] to VIKTOR, though scrappily recovered, is a good example of a Hollywood-related recruitment assessment message. Quoted in full:

**We are planning to use Vladimir Alexsandrovich POZNER (henceforth PLATON), a Jew, born in LENINGRAD no earlier than 1897. Until 1925 he lived in GERMANY, from 1925 to 1941 in FRANCE. In October 1939 he was called into the French Army as an officer-candidate because of [c% his knowledge of military aviation] and in August 1940 was demobilized. In the [U.S.] since May 1941. [3 groups unrecovered] petition for citizenship and received his first papers. In 1943 as a Lithuanian citizen [2 groups unrecovered] Soviet citizenship.**[40] **He studied in secondary schools in LENINGRAD, BERLIN and PARIS where he received a bachelor's degree from the PARIS university in 1926. [2 groups unrecovered] special courses in mathematics and applied [1 group unrecovered] at the SORBONNE, after which he worked until 1932**

**[13 groups unrecoverable]**

**[STUDIOS PARAMOUNT?]**[41]**, SAINT MAURICE in FRANCE. From 1932 to 1933 he worked as a sound recording engineer [5 groups unrecovered] to 1938**

**[6 groups unrecovered]**

---

[37] SF —> Moscow, no. 512, 7 December 1943, from KhARON.

[38] Collateral reports state that G., at least one brother and their father had connections to the Soviet Union and/or the C.P. It was also suggested that G. may have been able to exert some influence over L. as the latter may have been in a family hostage situation from the intelligence standpoint, i.e. relatives in Russia.

[39] LUKA = Pavel Klarin, short-term KGB Resident in NYC between MAKSIM and MAJ.

[40] The missing groups might be, "he holds". NY may be saying that he was a Lithuanian, which in 1943 meant a Soviet citizen, who had applied for U.S. citizenship.

[41] The only part recovered was "UNT", which NSA/GCHQ noted, in the 1974 reissue, was preceded by a gap that was of the right length to be "STUDIOS PARAMOUNT". We recall that the KGB had used Boris Morros's connection to Paramount.

**and from 1938 to 1939 was the chief engineer of the European branch of the MGM studios in PARIS. He is a prominent specialist on the various aspects of sound recording.**

**[19 groups unrecovered]**

**studio**

**[12 groups unrecovered]**

**Studio U ...**

**[48 groups unrecovered]**

**studios in SPAIN, BELGIUM, FRANCE and SWITZERLAND. In 1939 on a business trip for MGM for three months he studied production methods and organization of films in the best film studios of the [U.S.] At the present time he is head of the Russian section of the film department of the ARSENAL [U.S. War Dept.]. He has contacts in the [U.S.] with GERTsOG.**[42]

**A secretary at PLATON's [2 groups unrecovered] [c% Liza ...evna who is being redeveloped by us for use in connection with PLATON**[43]

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**there film director**

**[37 groups unrecoverable]**

**[3 groups missed] his sister – Elena KAGEN [4 groups missed], works in the OFFICE OF PR...**[44]

**[50 groups unrecoverable]**

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

**). He is characterized by KALISTRAT and other**[45]

**[7 groups unrecovered]**

**by GERTsOG**

**[33 groups unrecovered]**

**, but in the interests of business was withdrawn.**

**Please check PLATON and sanction his use as a probationer [agent] and a source of leads.**

**[11 groups unrecoverable]**

"Ambassador DAVIES is Using His Influence"

San Francisco —> Moscow, No. 140, 21 March 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR, contains one of several references in Venona to Joseph E. Davies, former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, and great apologist for Stalin. Quoted in full:

[42] The Russian–German word for "Duke". An unidentified covername found in Venona four other times.

[43] Liza [....]evna has not been identified.

[44] Presumably the Office of Price Administration.

[45] KALISTRAT = KGB NY officer Aleksandr Fomin.

**The former Ambassador DAVIES is using his influence in CARTHAGE [Washington] for the purpose of getting passports issued, for a visit home,[46] to Doctor H. [name withheld] and Doctor S. [name withheld]. H. is the personal physician of the WARNER brothers, owners of the film studio which made the picture "MISSION TO MOSCOW". S. is known to you by my letters. The visit is being subsidized by WARNER**

**[19 groups unrecovered]**

E. Broadcasting and Books

Some of the messages quoted in this section meet the definition of "special operations", the subject of Chapter XVIII. Five messages are quoted.

• NY —> Moscow, No. 601, from MAJ, no address found, concerns three separate matters. Paragraphs 1 and 3 are quoted as follows:

**1. The commentator of station WMCA, Norman JAY, henceforth BOKIJ, has twice sent DEDUShKA the text of his talks, which are consistently in a tone extremely friendly to us. We consider it advisable to profit by this circumstance and to invite BOKIJ [c% to a restaurant] and get acquainted in the line of cover. Telegraph what you think about BOKIJ.[47]**

**[paragraph 2. concerns KGB–GRU cooperation on a separate matter, rlb]**

**3. At a meeting in the plant GRIN[48] [c% handed] KALISTRAT a letter in which, in the name of the editor of 'NEW MASSES', Joe NORTH, he asks for financial assistance to be given to the magazine, which is in a bad way. For the present [d% I] [1 group unrecoverable] the reason for so strange a step on GRIN's part or his appealing to KALISTRAT in particular. Telegraph your opinion and instructions.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 1234, 29 August 1944, MAJ to VIKTOR, concerns already-recruited agents in the broadcasting industry. Covername GONETs = KGB agent Ricardo Setaro.

**Your no. 3464 [not available]. GONETs is working as deputy chief of the PROVINCIAL [Latin American] department of the 'Columbia Broadcasting System'. He was used by us earlier for the most part on liaison with ARTHUR, as a meeting point for couriers.[49] At the same time we used him on the processing of PROVINCIAL [i.e. Latin American]**

**[17 groups unrecoverable]**

**as a FELLOWCOUNTRYMAN. We are using him here on the processing of the CBS and of the diplomatic representation of the [U.S.]**

---

[46] "home" meant the USSR, though these gentlemen were U.S. citizens.

[47] The word BOKIJ translates as "PERKY". Jay was a well-known Stalinist apologist. Here NY only proposed an assessment meeting with Jay in the "line of cover", that is, in the TASS or Consular line. NY did not propose pitching Jay at that time. DEDUShKA = Soviet Consul General Evgenij Kiselev.

[48] GRIN = an u/i covername or the truename of the head of the front group, American Committee for the Protection of Foreign Born. See the special operations chapter — the section on the KOMAR case.

[49] ARTHUR = u/i covername for a major KGB illegal connected to Latin America.

**KAVALERIST[50] has explained that KEENEY and his wife were signed on apparently by the NEIGHBORS [GRU] for work in 1940.[51]**

The next three messages concern books or articles, and the execrable Joseph Davies re-appears in the first.

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1143, 14 July 1943, LUKA to VIKTOR, is poorly recovered:

**The well-known journalist Lou Henry [c%SHEF]ER told ZVUK[52] that Joseph DAVIES approached him with a request [1 group unidentified] for publication of compromising materials and information on the [c% POLECATS][53]**

**[38 groups unrecoverable]**

**motion picture 'Mission to Moscow'.[54] All information**

**[10 groups unrecovered]**

**We have materials and protocols**

**[48 groups unrecoverable]**

**a different [1 group unrecovered] against the American government.**

**Please advise**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**probationers [agents]**

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**and [UCN/7][55]**

**[13 groups unrecovered]**

- NY —> Moscow, No. 1410, 6 October 1944, MAJ to LUKA, contains two internally numbered messages, the first of which concerns our topic:

**In LUKA's time ATAMAN was promised 1000 dollars to pay for the publication of a book in Polish. 500 has been paid. ATAMAN is demanding the remaining 500. Do you sanction payment?**

In other words, KGB agent ATAMAN (Boleslaw Gebert), who reported on exile Poles in the U.S., had written a pro-Soviet book on the Polish question — underwritten by the KGB, who had been slow in paying up. LUKA was interim Resident, preceding MAJ.

- Moscow —> NY, No. 193, 3 March 1945 from VIKTOR. Here the Center asks the KGB NY to pull off a special operation relating to a book by the Soviet defector Alexander Barmine:

---

[50] KGB agent Sergej Kurnakov.

[51] That is, Phillip Olin Keeney and his wife Mary Jane Keeney had been recruited by the GRU in 1940. He had been affiliated with the OSS, and is mentioned in a KGB message of 1942 concerning that agency. I do not know if his appearance in this message connects to broadcasting or Latin America, or is unrelated.

[52] ZVUK = KGB net controller Jacob Golos.

[53] POLECATS = Trotskyites

[54] The movie was based on the equally stupid book of that name by Ambassador Davies.

[55] UCN/7 = u/i unrecovered covername.

**[75 groups unrecoverable]**

**title 'One Who Survived'. We are very interested in the content of the book, where the manuscript is, how many copies there are, who is the publisher, where it will be [b% published], how one might prevent the publication of the book, whether it is possible to [c% pinch] the manuscript. Deal with the affair through the [c% newspaper so that the desire to examine] [4 groups unrecovered]. The apparatus must not know about their investigation. Telegraph a detailed reply urgently.**

F. The GRU and the Media

Four NY GRU messages of 1943 illustrate that service's contacts in the press, particularly with Hanson W. Baldwin, military affairs editor with the New York Times. The connection looks much like the one the KGB had with Walter Lippmann — under a legal press cover, with no clandestine aspects other than the fact that the person reporting was GRU and his reports went out in secret GRU channels. The GRU point of contact with Baldwin was unidentified covername RANDOLPH, who from the context looks like a GRU officer under TASS cover, or, less likely, someone accredited to the Soviet Military Attache's office (or least likely, a GRU agent with access to media and political sources).

• GRU NY —> Moscow, Nos. 1074–1075, 5 July 1943, from MOLIERE to the Director. MOLIERE = Pavel P. Mikhajlov, GRU Resident in NY. An excellent report, and one to confirm the Soviets' worst fears about the secret plans of Churchill–Roosevelt.

**RANDOLPH sends the contents of his conversations with the editor of the military department of the 'New York Times', BALDWIN, the Republican attorney KERN (stands close to Governor DEWEY) and the editor of P.M., LERNER.**

**1. BALDWIN's statement:**

**(a) The American General Staff thinks that essentially the war is already won and therefore they can avoid a major struggle, [c% leaving it to] the USSR to hold back the German Army;**

**(b) In the General Staff he was told that Germany was not in a condition to undertake a further offensive this summer on the scale of 1941 and 1942. The Red Army could itself take initiative sooner than the Germans [1 group unrecovered] the offensive which is being prepared in the OREL–BRYaNSK area.**

**(c) American strategy remains as before — to play for time, waiting for the results of blockades, bombing and the Germans' losses on the Eastern front. For these reasons the production of tanks and [1 group unrecovered] arms for the land forces is now being slowed down.**

**(d) There will be no invasion of Western Europe this year. Next year it will depend on the scale of German losses during the summer and winter of 1943–1944.**

**(e) In the Mediterranean theater as before — leapfrog from island to island without risking big losses using enormous forces;**

**(f) An invasion of the Balkans might take place, but not before autumn and only if Sardinia, Sicily and the Dodecanese Islands have been taken and if the Germany Army is involved in large-scale operations in the East;**

**(g) Turkey will enter the war only after**

**[13 groups unrecoverable]**

**are exaggerated; losses will be 15–20%. ROOSEVELT and CHURCHILL [6 groups unrecovered] bombing, as this conforms with the refusal to open a second front.**

**(i) Operations in the Pacific theater [1 group unrecovered] situation, a large-scale advance will be begun in the late autumn in Burma. At the moment planes and troops are being sent to this theater rather than to the Mediterranean.**

**2. KERN's statement:**

**(a) DEWEY is convinced that there will not be a front in Europe this year. DEWEY told KERN about an unofficial discussion of this question at the conference of governors in June; there the [c% firm] opinion was expressed that the war would last another 2–3 years as the British and Americans no longer want to allow any big losses in men for political motives;**

**(b) The Republicans want to use the slowing down of operations at the front as an argument against ROOSEVELT's candidacy for a fourth term as President.**

**3. LERNER's statement:**

**(a) Conversations in Government circles have convinced him that there will be no second front in Europe this year/**

**(b) ROOSEVELT and CHURCHILL [5 groups unrecovered], trying to show that they are preparing to open a second front, but in actual fact their plan is the exhaustion of both Germany and the USSR in the East and then a deal with the industrialists and military circles in Germany; talks with industrialists have not been stopped.**[56]

**(c) The State Department has put pressure on BENES trying to force him to a rapprochement with the Polish Government. BENES**[57] **did not [2 groups unrecovered] them [1 group unrecovered], but was amazed at the scale of the influence in the USA of anti-Soviet groups.**

**4. The information is essentially a confirmation of reports received earlier from other sources. All three are well-informed sources especially the first two. We consider in general [5 groups unrecovered].**

- GRU NY —> Moscow, nos. 1172, 1173, 19 July 1943, MOLIERE to the Director is mostly unavailable — over 600 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable. The opening paragraph:

**RANDOLPH was in the CAPITAL [Washington DC] from [?] July to [?] July for the collection of information. He talked with many correspondents .....**

**[most of remainder not available: "Red Army" and "Stimson" among the few recovered words]**

[56] At this date, Max Lerner was still pro-Soviet and willing to follow a certain line. Of course there was some truth to what he reported to RANDOLPH.

[57] BENES = Eduard Benes, head of the Czech government in exile. Joan Callahan, head of NSA's Venona effort in the 1960s and 1970s believed that Benes was the KGB agent, covername "19". See Chapter XVII.

• GRU NY —> Moscow, Nos. 1243 and 1244, 28 July 1943, MOLIERE to the Director, reports another conversation between RANDOLPH and Hanson W. Baldwin:

> **RANDOLPH had another conversation with BALDWIN, who gave [48 groups unrecoverable] which the Americans are carrying on through the Vatican with the King and Marshal BADOGLIO. (The conversation took place before the events in Italy.)**
>
> **(b) The invasion of Southern ITALY (and SARDINIA) is to take place after the fall of SICILY. Simultaneously from CYPRUS and from SYRIA on the DODECANESE Islands and CRETE. (The General Staff believes there are 4 Axis divisions on CRETE).**
>
> **(c) In the autumn an invasion of the BALKANS will be made from Southern ITALY, from CRETE and the DODECANESE Islands. At that time ITALY will come over to the side of the Allies.**
>
> **(d) The Allies' views are based on the fact that 90% of the German forces will be held down in the East by the Red Army.**
>
> **(e) The USA thinks that in the East the Germans will remain on the defensive till Autumn and then make a strategic withdrawal to a line RIGA – KIEV – ODESSA, consolidate their position in the USSR and simultaneously strengthen their defense in Southern FRANCE, Northern Yugoslavia and in Western EUROPE. (The Germans do not expect an attack on Western FRANCE by ENGLAND this year..)**
>
> **(f) In the Spring of 1944 the English and Americans intend either to stipulate terms of surrender or (if they are not accepted) make an attack on FRANCE from ENGLAND and on Southern FRANCE from ITALY and CORSICA.**
>
> **2. KERN, who is close to Governor DEWEY, gave the same information in a conversation with RANDOLPH, referring to DEWEY's statements. The latter told KERN that Anglo–American plans remain unchanged: to create in [8 groups unrecoverable] declared:**
>
> **(a) ROOSEVELT has been severely shaken [1 group unrecovered] in order to strengthen his position for the 1944 elections.**
>
> **(b) The State Department fears that the creation in the USSR of a Polish division will have a 'bad' influence on the Poles, since they may link the liberation of POLAND with the fate of this division.**
>
> **(c) The Allies intend to use the Polish Army also in the attack on the BALKANS from SYRIA.**

• NY GRU —> Moscow, Nos. 1498–1499, MOLIERE to the Director contains over 400 unrecovered/unrecoverable groups. The opening phrase is of interest:

> **1. RANDOLPH on his regular trip to Washington ...**

Only a few other words and phrases were recovered including: "from the State Department"; "correspondent of the newspaper; "is returning from Finland".

As will be discussed in Chapter XXI, GRU decrypts are mostly from 1943, and are at best a sampling of GRU activities. However, the foregoing should establish that they had very knowledgeable, though seemingly non-clandestine, sources in the media.

# XX. THE KGB IN SAN FRANCISCO

## A. The Traffic

Some of the most important messages San Francisco <—> Moscow have appeared in earlier chapters. This chapter will concentrate on three topics: a discussion of the traffic volume, decryption success rate, and the organization and function of the Residency insofar as this can be understood from Venona; second, intelligence and tradecraft messages; and finally security messages, of which there are many, as San Francisco and other West Coast cities were the main ports for the Soviet merchant fleet operating between Russia and the U.S.

The Venona collection contains San Francisco —> Moscow Dip traffic from 1940 on; and Los Angeles —> Moscow traffic from 1941 : Consular, KGB, GRU and a few GRU–naval. Some statistics relating to West Coast KGB traffic:[1]

LA —> Moscow

| Year | Total Dip | Collected | KGB | Matched | Trans. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1941[2] | 90 | 40 | 13 | 0 | |
| 1942 | 100 | 43 | 0[3] | 0 | |
| 1943 | 132 | 116 | 2 | 0 | |
| 1944 | 219 | 207 | 17 | 0 | |
| 1945 | 193 | 186 | 0 | 0 | |
| 1946 | | | | 0 | |

SF —> Moscow

| Year | Total Dip | Collected | KGB | Matched | Trans. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1940 | 182 | 7 | 0 | 0 | |
| 1941 | 127[4] | 78 | 1 | 0 | |
| 1942[5] | 369 | 282 | 125 | 0 | |
| 1943 | 539 | 424 | 174 | 56 | 23 |
| 1944 | 468 | 457 | 163 | 163 | 95 |
| 1945 | 658 | 649 | 244[6] | 210 | 82 |
| 1946 | 605 | all | 225 | 73[7] | 25[8] |

The low traffic count – even allowing for the relatively poor coverage in 1941 suggests that the Los Angeles/Hollywood KGB representatives either communicated through the San Francisco Residency, relied on

[1] We have not found any KGB traffic originating in Portland, Seattle or the other ports, though decrypts show that the San Francisco KGB had officers, or at least informants/cooptees, in those cities.

[2] The 1941 messages were sent from Hollywood to Moscow; the numbers, except for the count of KGB messages, are imprecise.

[3] A few KGB messages are probably in the uncollected traffic.

[4] This number is probably a bit low.

[5] Message totals include SF —> Kuibyshev, the backup governmental center during the first year of the German–Russian war.

[6] This figure includes 17 unmatched messages in a special series the purpose of which is unknown (special series A1 48576).

[7] The traffic could be matched thru 14 June 1946. During that time 73 of 88 were matched; and it was 0 for 137 from 15 June to the end of the year.

[8] The last SF —> Moscow message translated was dated 14 June 1946, essentially the end of the U.S. <—> Moscow Venona exploitation period.

couriers and/or clandestine radio (if so nothing was intercepted by the U.S.), or that it was GRU territory.[9] From 1941 thru 1945, the GRU sent some 300 messages on that lane compared to 32 by the KGB. We might also guess that the 13 KGB messages of 1941 mostly relate to Bill Weisband and his handling of Jones O. York, the KGB's man in the aircraft industry.

**KGB Residents in San Francisco: Grigorij Kheifits, right, and his successor Grigorij Kasparov, left.**

Judging by the lack of traffic, even San Francisco didn't have a KGB Residency until 1942. Meanwhile, the GRU had been communicating from San Francisco since 1940 (the earliest year for which we have traffic) and continued to do so through 1945, sending more than 300 messages.[10] The GRU sent about 100 messages during 1942, their peak year (but see the preceding footnote), but in 1945 the KGB's traffic outnumbered the GRU's 244 to 35. This trend, that is the early preeminence of the GRU and the rise of the KGB during 1942, is consistent with the traffic comparisons in NYC and Washington.

Grigorij Kheifets, covername KhARON, arrived in San Francisco on 2 December 1941 to establish the KGB Residency. Note that the KGB sent one message from SF that year — pertaining to his arrival presumably, and more than 125 messages in 1942. Kheifits left San Francisco 6 July 1944, to return to Russia and was replaced as Resident by Grigorij Pavlovich Kasparov, covername DAR (GIFT). After he departed o/a 10 January 1945 to take over the Mexico City Residency, the unidentified message signatory FILIPP served as interim Resident, pending the arrival of MAJ (Stepan Apresyan), who had been the NYC Resident, in March 1945. All three of the regular KGB Residents worked under the cover of Vice–Consul.

B. KGB SF Intelligence and Tradecraft Messages

A number of the most important KGB San Francisco messages have appeared earlier in this report, e.g. Harry Dexter White's reports to the KGB during the UN Conference of 1945 (see chapter XII). Furthermore, the NY Residency ran agents in San Francisco and Los Angeles, a procedure that had begun in the pre-war period and continued to some extent right through the Venona period. We have almost no evidence from Venona

[9] The importance of couriers to the West Coast KGB and GRU should not be overlooked. Soviet ships were continually leaving the West Coast to return to the Russian Far Eastern ports.

[10] 266 messages are on hand in the Venona traffic collection — 300+ is a projection based on probable distribution of the missing traffic. In fact the GRU might have sent 100 or more messages in 1940 (only 7 of 182 Dip messages were collected, or retained, and all are GRU).

of atomic bomb agents under West Coast control, though some must have been.[11] This section, then, repeats a couple of the messages quoted earlier, but otherwise concentrates on the rather modest number of locally controlled assets. General tradecraft items, some peculiar to the locale, are also included.

Playwrights and Novelists

SF —> Moscow, No. 445, 31 October 1943, from KhARON, is interesting because of the names involved. The intelligence in the message is doubtful (or at least represented some fanciful setup for post-war Germany), which could be why we do not see these sources in traffic again. Covername POET = the refugee German playwrights Berthold Brecht or Berthold Vierte. Thomas Mann, the Nobel prize author, appears as a candidate for a democratic post-war government, a circumstance that his brother Heinrich, who had different allegiances, reported to the KGB. The message:

> **Heinrich MANN has reported that the former police chief of Berlin, GRZYNSKY, is conducting negotiations in CARTHAGE [Washington DC] about setting up a new government in Germany. There is being discussed, apparently, the following set-up — a government in which will be BRUNING and the Social Democrats. Thomas MANN will also become a member of the government. Heinrich Mann considers this information reliable and therefore is warning us. Heinrich MANN said that his brother Thomas is precisely in [4 groups unreported] CARTHAGE where [2 groups unrecovered] for reports. At the present time Thomas MANN is in Canada [1 group unrecovered] on [d% private] business.**
>
> **According to POET's information, RAUSCHNING[12] who is permanently domiciled in Los Angeles has unexpectedly left for CARTHAGE.**

Covername SMUTNYJ (VAGUE) and the Censorship Office

In January 1944, an FBI surveillance team in San Francisco saw James Walter Miller at a suspicious meeting with Grigorij Kheifets, the KGB Resident. Thereafter, the Bureau frequently found Miller in contact with Soviet officials on the West Coast. Miller, who died in 1950, was generally uncooperative when interviewed by the FBI in 1948. Though Miller was not identified as covername SMUTNYJ until 1959, long after his death, Venona messages about him provided some useful information about KGB operations and assets on the West Coast.

Miller, at various times and places, claimed six different places of birth (four in Russia; two in the U.S.) and used at least eight different names in the U.S. He knew a number of European languages, and originally applied to the Civil Service Commission, in 1941, for a position as a translator. From 10 August 1942 to 14 February 1944, he worked for the Postal Censorship Office in San Francisco, first in the Finance Section, which dealt with bank mail and exchange of credits, and later with the Security Section, where he was trained in locating secret writings, messages and codes. Presumably his long time membership in the Communist Party had gone undetected. He also had the assignment of routing diplomatic and foreign language mail to specialized

[11] e.g. Steve Nelson, a KGB agent active in Southern California among scientific personnel connected to ENORMOZ. Nelson has never been found in Venona.

[12] RAUSCHNING = Hermann Rauschning, German author and government official before the Nazis came to power.

Censorship examiners.[13] Four SMUTNYJ/Miller messages follow.

• SF —> Moscow, No. 450, 1 November 1943, from KhARON is the earliest Venona reference to SMUTNYJ, though that message refers to at least four earlier, but unrecovered, messages about him. The message contains three other covernames of interest:

DYaDYa (UNCLE) = Isaac Folkoff, a charter member of the American Communist Party and longtime Soviet agent (he had handled the subsidy payments delivered to the C.P. by KGB or GRU couriers in the later 1920s/early 30s). MAZhOR (MAJOR KEY) = Vyacheslav A. MISKLUK, KGB officer under clerk and chauffeur cover. MAP = u/i covername of a KGB agent. The text of the message:

> **Further to No. 241. Additionally there was received from SMUTNYJ through DYaDYa [1 group unrecovered] our people to remain in the COUNTRYSIDE [Mexico].**
>
> **[19 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **in South America connected with the countries [1 group unrecovered]**
>
> **DYaDYa**
>
> **[25 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **honest man, emphasizing, however, that SMUTNYJ is talkative. If SMUTNYJ's information (see our numbers 188, 205, and 226)[14] is of interest to us, please give us permission to sign on SMUTNYJ and entrust this case to MAZhOR. If [3 groups unrecovered] does not agree to organize the signing on of SMUTNYJ [4 groups unrecovered] in the following manner: DYaDYa will arrange the details with the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN [C.P. members]. According to this plan SMUTNYJ will have no inkling that the information is coming to us. We await your decision.**

Note the KGB's use of the C.P. for assessing and recruiting, and that SMUTNYJ was not to know that the information he would be providing "is coming to us", that is, the KGB. The next message expands on that plan, using the formula, "unconscious source".

• SF —> Moscow, No. 472, 9 November 1943, from KhARON[15] contains the same agent covernames as well as the truename HARRISON, who was Harrison George, editor of the Communist publication "People's World". The text:

> **Reference No. 4800 [not available]. Liaison with SMUTNYJ [1 group unrecovered] the editor of 'People's World', HARRISON**
>
> **[45 groups unrecoverable]**
>
> **MAP proceeded from the idea of using SMUTNYJ as an unconscious source. Suspicions of S.'s connection with the COMPETITORS[16] arose because S. is always pushing himself forward. The FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN [C.P. members] categorically rule out such an assumption [5 groups unrecovered] the value of his material. S. censors the**

[13] Item 59–19 in the Venona Collection is an excellent summary of Miller's activities and contains a point by point comparsion of his known career to that of the SMUTNJY of the Venona messages.

[14] None of these has been found, i.e. the messages could not be cryptanalytically entered for lack of matching traffic.

[15] Many San Francisco messages, especially the earlier ones, do not contain an address, (e.g. "to VIKTOR".

[16] COMPETITORS = in this case, the FBI.

**correspondence of the COUNTRY [U.S.] concerning financial transactions. This correspondence must [4 groups unrecovered] and in the appropriate work with S. was delayed. Give instructions.**

• NY —> Moscow, No. 511, 7 December 1943, from KhARON, gives an excellent example of the information that SMUTNYJ/Miller could provide the Russians, in this case operational security for the GRU–naval:

**Today SMUTNYJ reported that the Privileged Mail Department of the Censor's Office had discovered secret writing on opening a Neighbor's[17] letter addressed home. The letter was written on a form not exactly of the Consulate, and not exactly of the Purchasing Commission. SMUTNYJ has not managed to identify either the sender of the letter or the address of the recipient. I think it essential to check, in the first place with the Maritime Neighbors[18] whether they have not been giving instructions to their workers in BABYLON [S.F.] to effect communications in this manner. A worker of the Maritime Neighbors, DEMChENKO, has recently arrived in our establishment as a secretary.**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**Further, SMUTNYJ reported that he had received**

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**addressed to P.F. DRAChUK at the address MOSCOW, ARBAT, Malonikolo–Peskovskij Pereulok No. 6, Flat No. 4.**

**Further SMUTNYJ was entrusted with keeping an eye on the current account in the 'Bank of America' of a certain G.V. KRAVChENKO, who was living in ROSTOV Malyj Prospekt, No. 25. On account KRAVChENKO has 33 dollars.**

SF —> Moscow, No. 539, 31 December 1943, from KhARON, forwards information from SMUTNYJ about FBI surveillance of Soviet banking activities:

**[2 groups unrecovered] SMUTNYJ has reported [1 group unrecovered] the transfer from SMYRNA [Moscow] through the Bank of America**

**[47 groups unrecoverable]**

**all functions being under the strict surveillance of employees of the KhATA [FBI]. [3 groups unrecovered] transferred 4,300 dollars.**

Spies in the Aviation and Electronics Industries

Jones Orin York, covername IGLA (NEEDLE) a KGB agent in the aircraft industry from about 1935, has often been mentioned in this study, especially because of his connection to KGB agent Bill Weisband who was with ASA/AFSA at Arlington Hall 1943–1950. He may have been the KGB's most important West Coast asset.

SF —> Moscow, No.446, 31 October 1943, from KhARON, gives an idea of IGLA/York's work:

**IGLA has handed over 5 films of material on the XP–58 and new motors for it. [3 groups unrecovered] will be sent by next post.**

[17] Neighbor = GRU or GRU–naval, in this case the latter.

[18] Maritime Neighbors = GRU–naval.

**NIK[19] has received the impression that IGLA at present is doing all he can to [1 group unrecovered] our [1 group unrecovered] and to pass on to us the most essential material. IGLA [c% considers that] all material on "**

**[17 groups unrecoverable]**

**nevertheless complains of difficulties. IGLA is in desperate need of funds for buying a house and his [3 groups unrecovered] 800 dollars. [1 groups unrecovered] giving of this sum.**

SF —> Moscow, No. 457, 2 November 1943, from KhARON requested the Center's approval to spend 250–300 dollars for Christmas presents (for agents) and:

**in accordance with my No. 247 800 dollars for IGLA. Therefore please remit 1200 for expenses up to the end of the year in accordance with the estimate [which was $3000, rlb] and an additional 1100 dollars if you sanction the payment to IGLA and the expenditure on Christmas presents. Please let me know your decision regarding the presents urgently.[20]**

SF —> Moscow, No. 28, 17 January 1944, from KhARON, concerns a Soviet inspector at the aircraft plants who volunteered for espionage duty and cited his prior work in that regard. Covername BLERIOT = Stanislav Shumovsky, a veteran KGB officer, long under Soviet aviation industry cover, who was important to the Jones O. York and Boris Morros cases:

**The engineer Petr Aleksandrovich BELYaEV is working as an inspector of the STORE[21] in LOS ANGELES at the DOUGLAS and LOCKHEED plants. BELYaEV is well informed as to the situation at the plants. He told me that valuable intelligence was being lost in as much as [4 groups unrecovered]. At one time he used to work with BLERIOT and, as BELYaEV says, 'we used to send home first rate intelligence'. [1 group unrecovered][22] whether BELYaEV was connected with BLERIOT on the work. If so please vet BELYaEV and authorize his [d% signing on].**

**BELYaEV turned over instructions on the night fighter 'P–70' which he considers most valuable and unknown to us. State whether this information is to be signaled to you.**

SF —> Moscow, No. 45, 29 January 1944, signature not recovered probably answers Moscow's affirmative reply to the last sentence of the foregoing message:

**1. Advise the covername for contact.**

---

[19] NIK = Amadeo Sabatini, IGLA's handler at that time.

[20] KhARON, it seems, wanted to beat the Holiday rush.

[21] STORE (MAGAZIN) = Soviet Government Purchasing Commission (SGPC). The SGPC had representatives throughout the U.S. handling the procurement, inspection and shipment of war goods bound for the Soviet Union under Lend Lease. Many KGB (and probably GRU, though the traffic does not say) officers were in the SGPC where they were handled as agents because they were separated from the Residencies and the cover schemes of the latter.

[22] Notice this typical example of NSA/GCHQ not supplying the obvious meaning of an unrecovered or unrecoverable group. For some reason CIA, unlike the FBI, often missed the point and suggested that NSA "try" certain words or phrases. During the book-breaking, Meredith Gardner and his colleagues did have to try various words and do some guessing. However, that was separate from the formulas "xx groups unrecovered" or "xx groups unrecoverable", where trying and guessing had no cryptanalytic meaning.

**2. The night fighters 'P–70' were fulfilled by contract with the Army [2 groups unrecovered] new medium bombers [1 group unrecovered] 'A–20'**

**[21 groups unrecovered]**

**task of the 'P–70' fighters. The output of the 'P–70' planes is continuing in 1944 according to Army and British contracts. The British order for 'P–70' in 1943 of 125 planes of which 100 were made was granted an extension.**

**3. The P–70 fighter has the following armament: 6 fifty caliber machine guns**

**[18 groups unrecovered]**

**50 caliber type "M–[1 group unrecovered]**

**[76 groups unrecovered]**

Two poorly recovered messages of early 1944 discuss a new potential source spotted and assessed by DYaDYa, KGB agent Isaac Folkoff who is described earlier in this chapter.

SF —> Moscow, No. 55, 8 February 1944, from KhARON mentions this potential asset in the second or third internal message:

**DYaDYa [3 groups unrecovered] the sum of 500 dollars. Please sanction. DYaDYa [4 groups unrecovered] to us engineer H. [name withheld], who is working for 'STANDARD OIL' and the engineer**

**[6 groups unrecovered]**

**technical work with**

**[9 groups unrecovered]**

SF —> Moscow, No. 101, 5 March 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR, continues the story of the engineer 'H.' However, about 250 groups are unrecovered/unrecoverable. The covername DYaDYa was found twice. The first sentence and some other recovered phrases:

**Herewith identificatory particulars for H. [name withheld], a citizen of the COUNTRY [U.S.]**

**********

**SOUTH AFRICA 27 October 1902. His father ...**

**********

**brother is a member of the South African Parliament is serving in the military**

SF —> Moscow, No. 133, 19 March 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR introduces three new covernames:

BRUSOV = u/i
MYaSNIK [BUTCHER] = Peter Zounes
AL'MA = Leo Levanas

Both Zounes and Levanas had been identified in SF —> Moscow, No. 31, 17 January 1944, which gave truename and covername. The message text:

**BRUSOV has passed on a description of the B–25J, information about a new version of the installation in the nose of the B–25 of 8 machine guns, and voluminous material on the**

**B–25J. Inform whether the data about the B–25J and the version of the machine gun installation should be telegraphed to you.**

**MYaSNIK reported that AL'MA [3 groups unrecovered] to us his service. AL'MA, with whom I am acquainted personally, asked MYaSNIK to organize a meeting with me for clarification of the question of how he can be useful to us. In my opinion such a meeting is expedient. I request instructions.**

The next two messages concern two agents, brothers apparently, with access to information about the B–29 and radar. NSA first issued these messages in 1958 (I quote from the October 1974 reissues) and the FBI then identified two likely suspects. Neither seems to fit: one wasn't known to have a brother; the other never had technical training or experience:

• SF—> Moscow, No. 150, 29 March 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR concerns u/i covername SEM [SAM], whose doubtfully identified brother will appear in the second message:

**Permit giving [1 group unrecovered] to SEM of 300 dollars. '[1 group unrecovered]'[23]**

**[9 groups unrecovered]**

**on the production of parts for the B–29 engine and radar. SEM's new place of work may in the future be of interest. For [c% participation in this technical work]**

**[5 groups unrecovered]**

**the sum of 1000 dollars is insufficient by 300 [dollars]. We assume that we must render assistance to SEM and pay him [1 group unrecovered] this sum.**

• SF —> Moscow, No. 232, 25 May 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR, brings in SEM's brother, whose name in the Russian came out as Borton Perri[24] and whose covername was to be SEDAR [CEDAR]. The message:

**In letter no. 2 you were given some information about the [d% engineer] Borton PERRI, in future SEDAR who is SEM's [d% elder] brother. On 22 May SEM advised that SEDAR had come to BABYLON [S.F.] for a very limited time and that it would be possible to meet him [c% only] on 23 May. Not having time to clear the matter with you and considering his forthcoming departure, having consulted DAR[25] [3 groups unrecovered] with SEDAR. SEDAR [4 groups unrecovered] radar**

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**on military [1 group unrecovered]. As a result of the conversation SEDAR handed over a full technical description**

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**types of radar and**

**[7 groups unrecovered]**

**SEDAR at present is conducting tests of a glider bomb which is automatically guided by radar. [4 groups unrecovered] SEDAR will**

[23] That is, the quotation marks were recovered, but not the group they framed.

[24] A highly unlikely truename, but rather the KGB's best efforts to transliterate. The more likely true spelling may be guessed.

[25] DAR = Grigorij Kasparov, who succeeded KhARON/Khefits as S.F. Resident.

**[17 groups unrecovered]**

DAR becomes the San Francisco Resident

Several messages relate to the transition from Kheifets (KhARON) to Grigorij Kasparov (DAR). Kheifets had been the San Francisco KGB Resident since December 1941 and had probably established (or re-established) the Residency.

- SF —> Moscow, No. 268, 21 June 1944, DAR to VIKTOR lists some of the sources taken over personally by DAR. All the identified covernames are Soviets, some of them KGB officers, suggesting that this message concerns the Internal Line:

> **At the beginning of June I took over contact with VITALIJ at PORTLAND. ChASTNYJ is being taken over by MAZhOR. At Los Angeles I took over JULIA, IVERI and PETR, I did not take over personal contact with MIKhAJLOV on account of his knowing JULIA and**
>
> **[75 groups unrecovered**
>
> **to HERDSMAN, K–11 and MUSICIAN.**[26]

- SF —> Moscow, No. 311, 3 August 1944, DAR to VIKTOR gave the itinerary of departing KGB senior officers, including the former Resident KhARON and LUKA (Pavel Klarin):

> **KhARON, LUKA, RUSAKOV and GORBUNOVA left Portland 24 July on the ship 'PIShchEVAYa INDUSTRIYa'. They will be in Vladivostok 15–18 August. KhARON and LUKA request transfers to them in Vladivostok of two thousand rubles each in advance. LUKA left a letter addressed to comrade PETROV (Beria) about the mistakes of YURIJ on the GNOME affair.**[27]

- Moscow —> SF, No. 374, 7 November 1944, from VIKTOR, was presumably for DAR:

> **The Government has awarded you the Order of the Red Star. On behalf of us all and of the Presidium I warmly congratulate you on this high award and wish you the best of success in your work for the good of our country.**

MAJ's Problems in San Francisco

MAJ, who had been the New York Resident, and his sub-Resident SERGEJ, who used TASS cover, went to San Francisco in March 1945 to handle operations relating to the UN Conference. They had a number of meetings with KGB agent Harry Dexter White (covername RICHARD at that time), an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. All the Harry White messages found in Venona, including four SF —> Moscow messages, are in Chapter XII. of this study.

MAJ also had to learn about less spectacular agents too, the long-time assets of the San Francisco Residency such as Isaac Folkoff, covername DYaDYa, who had been involved in Communist conspiratorial activities in Europe and the U.S. since the turn of the century. Some examples of MAJ's difficulties:

---

[26] These last three covernames and covername ChASTNYJ are all unidentified. Those identified are VITALIJ = Pavel Kuzmich Revizorov, SGPC rep. in Portland and KGB officer heading an informant net; MAZhOR = KGB officer V.A. Misluk under clerk and chauffeur cover; JULIA = KGB officer Olga Khlopkova, who had a connection to Beria — as did IVERI = Michael Kalatozov, the Soviet film rep in California; PETR = KGB officer Aleksandr P. Grachev, under cover of SGPC port engineer in Long Beach, California.

[27] See chapter XVIII for the GNOME affair which involved the unsuccessful effort by the KGB to get Trotsky's murderer out of a Mexican prison. YURIJ = Lev Tarasov, the much criticized Mexico City Resident.

*XX. THE KGB IN SAN FRANCISCO*

• SF —> Moscow, No. 138, 3 April 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR concerns DYaDYa/Folkoff and the unidentified female agent MAP, who had been a cutout for material obtained from James Walter Miller (SMUTNYJ). FILIPP = an unidentified KGB officer who served as interim Resident following DAR and before MAJ. The message:

> **1. With DYaDYa [4 groups unrecovered] 7th April. Not later than 6th April inform me of his distinguishing features since there is no photograph here and there may be a misunderstanding owing to the rather unfortunate password.**[28]
>
> **2. Telegraph MAP's surname since FILIPP cannot say exactly what it is. I have already established official contact with her institution and shall use the contact for resuming liaison by password.**[29]

• SF —> Moscow, No. 143, 6 April 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR continues the DYaDYa story:

> **I talked with DYaDYa by telephone. With great difficulty he remembered the password but gave me to understand that he had completely forgotten the conditions of a meeting. Since I shall have to go to him at his house telegraph without delay whether he has a family and whether they know about his relations with us.**

• SF —> Moscow, Nos. 483, 484, 13 September 1945, MAJ to VIKTOR is about half recovered. The message concerns the resources of the Residency, especially a vehicle for agent meets:

> **[73 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **[c% dollars expenditure out of all] [14 groups unrecovered] states that the deficiencies in**
>
> **[15 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **he naturally adopts an ironical attitude towards [2 groups unrecovered] that I 'have not accumulated a lot of money'.**
>
> **[1 group unrecovered] stupid**
>
> **[14 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **a poor relation. It is quite obvious that, having no claims to the independent use of the PLANT [Consulate] transport, I cannot keep on and on vindicating vis-a-vis OLEG the abnormal situation at present.**
>
> **I beg you in making a review of this question to take into account that at present I [9 groups unrecovered] a necessary thing. It is sufficient to say by way of illustration that I could not meet YUN or MIKhAJLOV without a car.**[30] **Since there had been shadowing at the beginning of my stay in CAEN [Hollywood/L.A.] I wasted a whole day in checking and only when convinced of the complete absence of shadowing did I walk to the meeting with YuN. In a town like CAEN I should be simply walked off my feet.**

---

[28] We don't know what the "rather unfortunate password" was, but we do have a rather odd one in SF —> Moscow, No. 270, 22 June 1944, a short message: "Password for contacting LYRE [u/i]: 'Greetings from CHARLOTTE CORDAY'." Charlotte Corday had murdered Danton in 1793 during the French Revolution.

[29] See also the second internal message in SF —> Moscow, No. 433, 11 Aug 1945 where MAJ asks VIKTOR to, "Advise KARL's surname as the correct surname is unknown to us ..."

[30] YUN = Stephen Laird, KGB agent, writer for Time magazine and sometime Hollywood producer. See Chapter XIX. MIKhAJLOV = Petr A. Belyaev, KGB officer under SGPC cover.

**Comrade Petrov [Beria] allowed SERGEJ to buy a car for his line.[31] However, this does not in any way solve my problem, for SERGEJ and I cannot be dependent on each other. It should not be forgotten that in TYRE [NYC]**

**[18 groups unrecoverable]**

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 403
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

C. Security Countermeasures at the San Francisco Residency

The reader should refer back to Chapter XIII. for Venona messages concerning security matters at the NY Residency. This section gives examples from Venona for general security measures in San Francisco; the next section will cover the security of the merchant fleet, a major problem for the KGB on the West Coast.

Cryptography, Technical and Document Security

Following are five messages relating to the above categories.

- SF —> Moscow, No. 441, 31 October 1943, from KhARON concerns the famous Code POBJEDA:

**I confirm receipt of Code '075–B' copy No. 27. Code 'POBJEDA' will be destroyed [2 groups unidentified] after such code has been received in TYRE [NYC].**

Code 075–B, never seen by NSA/GCHQ was designated by the Venona working party as [redacted] A one-part code, it was particularly amenable to exploitation because of the [redacted] change of 1 May 1944. This particular message was not read until long after Meredith Gardner had largely recovered the unseen Code 075–B (a designator unknown to him) through bookbreaking and exploitation of [redacted] Partially burned copies of POBJEDA, a two-part code, had been recovered by two different TICOM teams in Germany in 1945.

- SF —> Moscow, No. 452, 17 December 1944, signature not recovered contains three internal message numbers. The second, which concerns technical security, is quoted as follows:

**After receiving an order from the SINDICATE [Ministry of Foreign Affairs], KhOZYaIN[32] tested the wiring of the building. 'M' was not discovered, but in all the corridors there are telephones for conversations within the house.[33] During our inspection the wires of these telephones were cut [4 groups unrecovered]. The communications system 'M' [4 groups unrecovered] details we will report by post.**

- The first half of SF —> Moscow, No. 32, 30 January 1946, MAJ to VIKTOR is poorly recovered, but it clearly refers to poor security procedures for handling documents and message texts:

**KOLOMENSKIJ [u/i] has passed word**

**[18 groups unrecovered]**

**ZhAROV with**

**[20 groups unrecovered]**

[31] In this message covername SERGEJ is probably Viktor V. Afanasev, a KGB officer then heading the Fifth Line — port and merchant fleet security — who had a position independent of the Resident. Ironically, that other covername SERGEJ — Vladimir Pravdin — had also at times been independent of MAJ back at the NY Residency (I often refer to Pravdin as Co or Sub-Resident in NY).

[32] KhOZYaIN (MASTER) = probably Andrej E. Vasiliev, Consul General in San Francisco.

[33] In NY —> Moscow No. 824, 7 June 1944, MAJ told the Center that he would be using the letter "M" to mean surveillance. So, no technical surveillance had been found.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)

**texts of deciphered telegrams.**

**[16 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

**telegraph your opinion. We have no grounds for asserting that documents in this condition have got into the waste paper, but we consider it criminal [5 groups unrecovered] complete deciphered texts. We are taking steps to put an immediate stop to this sort of thing happening. Please [c% warn ZhAROV [through?] the SINDICATE in such a way, however, as not to disclose KOLOMENSKIJ.**[34]

- SF —> Moscow, No. 40, 1 February 1946, MAJ to VIKTOR, continues the ZhAROV story and presents a security plan for the Consulate, developed by covername BORIS, presumably Aleksandr P. Saprykin, who had been cipher officer at the NY Consulate and a KGB informant:

**Since repeated attempts by BORIS to achieve proper order in ZhAROV's office have not led to satisfactory results, BORIS proposes, and I support him, that the following measures should be carried out through the SINDICATE [Ministry of Foreign Affairs].**

**1. The secret documents from each FIRM**[37] **which have to be destroyed first, should be kept in appropriate iron boxes in one place. The duty officer who takes over the [cabinet] containing these documents [2 groups garbled] be given instructions on the order in which to destroy the documents in case of an alarm.**

**2. The keys of the iron boxes of all the FIRMS (including ours) should be left with the boxes, which should be sealed only, since if the keys were missing it might be impossible to destroy the contents in time.**

**3. For the same reason, the safes should be sealed but not locked.**

[34] ZhAROV = possibly Nikolaj Ezhov the cipher officer at the Consulate. KOLOMENSKIJ = an unidentified KGB informant in the Consulate.

[35] VNUK = u/i covername, presumably a KGB officer.

[36] No. 15 = the internal number for the preceding message, external No. 34 of 30 January 1946.

[37] In this case FIRM meant the different Soviet organizations at the Consulate (in another message, "our FIRM" means KGB).

**4. The duty officer should have a complete inventory showing the number of safes, boxes and [1 group unrecovered] containing secret documents with an indication of the degree of importance of the contents of each to be destroyed.**

**5. A signal system should be introduced permitting the immediate mobilization of all workers within the confines of the PLANT in case of an alarm.**

**6. Instructions should be drawn up for the conduct of the duty officer during hours of duty an particularly in the event of an alarm.**

**7. In order to avoid the unnecessary accumulation of secret documents the files should be reviewed monthly and documents destroyed the keeping of which**

**[6 groups unrecoverable]**

**[58 groups unrecovered]**

**to make sure there are no incompletely**

**[18 groups unrecovered]**

"Warn the NEIGHBORS About the Childish Conduct"

• SF —> Moscow, No. 131, 18 March 1944 shows the San Francisco KGB's security oversight of the Vice-Consulate in Los Angeles and of the GRU group there:

**Boris MOLChANOV, who works for the NEIGHBORS[38] in LOS ANGELES, did not turn up for night duty.**

**[15 groups unrecovered]**

**MOLChANOV [4 groups unrecovered]. Taking into account the fact that in connection with the PILIPENKO affair[39] there is a possibility of intensified shadowing [4 groups unrecovered] for his part MOLChANOV [1 group unrecovered] that he 'did not wish to [6 groups unrecovered]' it is necessary to warn the NEIGHBORS about the childish conduct of their workers.**

Countersurveillance

• Moscow —> SF, No. 306, 20 September 1944, from VIKTOR has been quoted elsewhere in a different context but is worth repeating:

**According to information received by us intensified surveillance is being directed against you personally. Try to check more carefully, bear this situation in mind in your future work. Temporarily discontinue keeping rendezvous. Telegraph if the surveillance continues.[40]**

An Indiscreet Conversation at the Hospital

[38] NEIGHBORS = in this case the GRU.

[39] PILIPENKO = Ivan Ilich Pilipenko, 1st assistant vice-consul in Los Angeles. Probably a GRU officer. I do not know what the "PILIPENKO affair" was about unless the reference is to the IVERI scandal of about that time which KGB SF reported in "personal to PETROV (Beria) messages. See chapter XIX.

[40] The source of VIKTOR's information? One guess might be an FBI report to the President that could have been seen by Lauchlin Currie et al.

• SF —> Moscow, No. 71, 1 March 1945, from the interim Resident, Filipp, to VIKTOR, is an informant-type report about the supposed loose talk between Consul–General Andrej E. Vasilev and his new cipher officer, Fedoseev (who seemed to be following the ways of his predecessor):

> **In a conversation with me on 28th February 1945 VOLKOV[41] reported the following:**
>
> **On 24th February he found the Consul–General, Comrade VASIL'EV, and the head of the Cipher Office, Comrade FEDOSEEV, discussing the text of a cipher telegram in a hospital ward (Comrade VASIL'EV is ill and is in hospital). On leaving the hospital with the Consul–General's wife VOLKOV questioned her as to why they always worked [talked?] so freely. The latter answered: 'Previously they used to read the cipher telegrams, but now they have invented a new method – elucidating everything by correspondence'.[42] It has been established that Comrade VASIL'EV receives American citizens of Russian origin in the ward and tells them whom they should select for the Russo–American Institute. He indicated to ARNAUTOV[43] who should be voted for and gave**
>
> **[3 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **VOLKOV [8 groups unrecovered] to KhRAMEEV[44] [12 groups unrecovered] the impermissability of discussing this [5 groups unrecovered] 'that is nonsense'.**
>
> **[10 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **in the hospital ward.**

The Redin Affair

On 26 or 27 March 1946, the FBI arrested Lt. Nikolaj G. Redin, a GRU officer, in Portland on charges of espionage. Three KGB San Francisco telegrams that discuss the case were read by NSA many years later : the first two in June 1970, and the third in April 1980, one of the last Venona decrypts and translations before the program shut down. The messages were only partially recovered. Covername VLADISLAV = Lt. Redin; SINDICATE = the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs; OLEG = Consul–General Vavilov.

• SF —> Moscow, No. 139, 5 April 1946, MAJ to VIKTOR. The significant part of the recovered text was as follows:

> **If you have not already informed OLEG [the Consul General in SF, rlb] through the SINDICATE of your opinion about the inadvisability of my being drawn into the VLADISLAV affair [3 groups unrecovered] court I ask you to do this at once. OLEG just telegraphed that I should go to Portland.**

• SF —> Moscow, No. 125, 27 March 1946, MAJ to VIKTOR:

[41] VOLKOV = Andrej Romanovich Orlov, a KGB officer, at the Consulate under SGPC cover.

[42] I do not understand the new method described by Madame Consul–General.

[43] Viktor Arnautoff, first President of the Russian–American Society, Inc.

[44] A consular employee; affiliation unknown.

**In connection with the arrest of REDIN[45] OLEG [4 groups unrecovered] in negotiations with the KhATA [FBI] in PORTLAND. With**

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**in PORTLAND through [5 groups unrecovered] me. Otherwise orient me about the line of conduct.**

- SF —> Moscow, No.126, 28 March 1946, MAJ to VIKTOR, is a long scrappily recovered message, with about 300 groups not recovered. In the following, the recovered parts are separated by asterisk and I have not accounted for the missing groups:

**He is taking steps toward the liberation of VLADISLAV at least on bail**

**********

**VLADISLAV was arrested by the KhATA [FBI] on 26 March on the street before he got on the ship 'ALMA ATA'**

**********

**bond in the amount of 25 thousand American dollars**

**********

**the arrest took place in the presence of a probationer of the Fifth Line IZABELLO**

In other words, Redin was arrested just before boarding a ship to return to the Soviet Union and while he was talking with IZABELLO, a KGB agent (Soviet citizen) assigned to merchant fleet/port security, under the control of the Fifth Line. We now turn to that Line.

D. The Fifth Line of the KGB: Security of the Merchant Fleet

Chapter XIII. contains a great deal of information from the perspective of the KGB New York Residency about the security of the Soviet merchant fleet: personnel, cargo, ships, ports; and how covername AKIM (Sergej Lukyanov) tried to coordinate this work as head of the Fifth Line in the U.S. It will be recalled that he did not have much luck — desertions, suicides and suspected sabotage continued. In July 1944, MAJ and AKIM visited the West Coast for a review of the problems there. In November 1944, AKIM had a heart attack and MAJ pleaded with the Center that AKIM be given some rest and special recognition.

The West Coast ports were the most important to the Soviets, so San Francisco reporting on Fifth Line matters is even more extensive than that of New York. Most reports of this type, from San Francisco to Moscow Center, were addressed to SEMEN, the unidentified senior official who oversaw the security of the Merchant Fleet and probably all Soviet citizens serving abroad in an official capacity.[46]

AKIM and other leaders of the Fifth Line had an impossible job. Nonetheless, considering that thousands of Russian sailors came ashore in the U.S., it would seem that only a small number deserted, a number, however, that was intolerable to SEMEN, Comrade PETROV and the Soviet system. The counterintelligence system used by the KGB seems hopelessly complicated — every ship had what were called "ships probationers", that

[45] Note that MAJ has dispensed with the covername.

[46] As noted earlier, many SF messages, especially the earlier ones do not contain a specific Moscow addressee. At one time Meredith Gardner and his associates thought that SEMEN might be Beria, head of the KGB and the entire police and security apparatus of the USSR. Later it became clear that covername PETROV, much less frequently addressed or mentioned, was Beria. No new candidate for SEMEN appears in the Venona collection.

is agents, who were responsible for spying on the crews and passengers, for port security and even for liaising and propagandizing with leftist U.S. longshoremen. A larger ship might have an agent net. Whatever the particular case, Moscow telegraphed the identities of hundreds of these agents to the S.F. and NY Residencies and expected KGB officers, detached from the Residencies, and typically under Soviet Government Purchasing Commission (SGPC) cover, to make contact with these "ships probationers" and control their collection and reporting of information. Merely finding these agents, exchanging passwords and working out a means of keeping in contact must have been very difficult.

Various examples from Venona follow. A few of the messages were probably not Fifth Line but are included here as they relate to this general topic. Several of the messages from Moscow to SF give really excellent insight into KGB operational doctrine, policy and organization.

Closing an Old Case

In SF —> Moscow, No. 11, 7 January 1944, the Resident, KhARON reported that an old desertion case had been closed. Unfortunately, we do not have the details as to how this was accomplished:

> **ChIZhKOV, who deserted from the 'URALMASh' in 1940, was sent off by us on 4 January on the ship 'ASMUSSAR' from SEATTLE. A statement was taken from him that in [3 groups unrecovered]. ChIZhKOV [4 groups unrecovered] according to our proposal**
>
> **[8 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **give instructions in VLADIVOSTOK.**

The Elizabeth KUZNETsOVA Case

Following are several messages, or extracts, concerning the search for the deserter Elizabeth Kuznetsova, which went on for a year and a half.

• SF —> Moscow, No. 65, 10 February 1944, from KhARON. Covername MAZhOR = KGB officer Vyacheslav A. Misluk:

> **On the 9th of February of this year in PORTLAND second mate Elizaveta Mitrofanovna KUZNETsOVA, born 1910 deserted from the S.S. 'PSKOV'. KUZNETsOVA without receiving permission from the immigration authorities to remain in the U.S.A. went into hiding. On this matter we are sending MAZhOR to Portland.**

• SF —> Moscow, No. 151, 30 March 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR concerns several cases. Following are the recovered parts of the message concerning Kuznetsova (VITALIJ = KGB officer Pavel K. Revizorov):

> **MAZhOR [4 groups unrecovered] March 1944 in a report writes that KUZNETsOVA is still hiding in PORTLAND. VITALIJ is not taking part in the search for K. K–13, E–14 and IGOR have been coopted for the search.**[47]

[note by rlb: the message closes with a fragment about sending, 'VITALIJ to PORTLAND and SEATTLE on the KUZNETsOVA case.'

• SF —> Moscow, No. 159, 12 April 1944, from KhARON is poorly recovered. The end of the message concerns the KGB's use of a naturalized U.S. citizen in the search: ZhUChKA (WATCH–DOG) = Nadia Morris Osipovich who worked for the SGPC and lived in Portland:

[47] K–13, E–13 and IGOR = unidentified covernames, who were probably "Ship's Probationers", and thus Soviet citizens.

**allegedly VITALIJ used ZhUChKA for the search for KUZNETsOVA. VITALIJ denies co-opting ZhUChKA on the KUZNETsOVA case.**

• SF —> Moscow, No. 293, 11 July 1944, DAR ( who was the new Resident, Grigorij Kasparov) to SEMEN contains several internal messages, the last of which stated:

**According to rumor KUZNETsOVA has married a taxi driver, is living in SAN FRANCISCO**

**[9 groups unrecovered]**

**PORTLAND [3 groups unrecovered] is being carried out. [2 groups unrecovered] to establish where she is living.**

• In SF —> Moscow, No. 166, 16 April 1945, SERGEJ, who was Viktor V. Afanasev, head of the Fifth Line, reported to SEMEN that she had been tentatively located. This long, mostly unrecovered message concerns several subjects, and the final paragraph concerns this case:

**4. According to information the traitor KUZNETsOVA is in a hospital in the PORTLAND area (KUZNETsOVA [d% has tuberculosis])**

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**probationer BRAMS with the aim of sounding out the frame of mind of KUZNETsOVA and the possibilities of getting her out.[48] BRAMS is an old [c% family] acquaintance and enjoys her confidence. BRAMS was advised by me of VITALIJ's instructions. I will report the results.**

• SF —> Moscow, No. 295, 1 June 1945, SERGEJ to SEMEN summarizes a number of cases and contains the definitive statement that:

**KUZNETsOVA is in a tuberculosis hospital in the PORTLAND area.**

• In the short message SF —> Moscow, No. 568, 7 November 1945, SERGEJ reported to SEMEN the sad conclusion to this case:

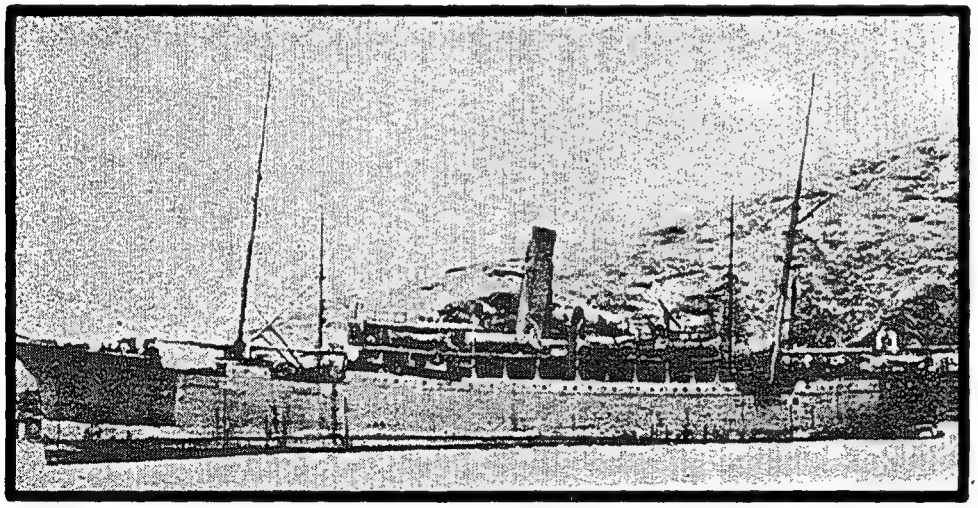
**On 4 November this year the traitor to the fatherland KUZNETsOVA was shipped to VLADIVOSTOK on the tanker 'BELGOROD'. Details in a supplement.[49]**

[48] BRAMS = perhaps the mechanic Pugaev, an informant on the ship "BAKU".

[49] We do not have the referenced supplement nor does the Venona Collection have any information about how Elizabeth Kuznetsova came into KGB hands. Crews of the Merchant Fleet were under military law and the death penalty was applied to deserters.

*XX. THE KGB IN SAN FRANCISCO*

"The Deserter LEN Escaped"



**The seaman deserter LEN was held on the Russian ship "IL'ICH" by KGB agents. The ship sank soon after.**

Ivan Len, a crewman from an unidentified ship, had deserted sometime prior to 25 March 1944 (circumstances not found in Venona). Four messages describe what happened after that.

- SF —> Moscow, No. 145, 26 March 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR:

  **On the night of 25th–26th March MANUILOV, the boatswain of the steamship 'NEVA', brought the deserter LEN, with whom he had been drinking, on board the steamship 'IL'ICH'. MANUILOV's meeting and drinking with LEN took place [5 groups unrecovered] LEN on our ship**

[note by rlb: the sense of the rest of the message, 14 groups unrecovered, is uncertain but the words 'the Norwegian' and 'Boarding the ship went off calmly.' were recovered.]

- SF —> Moscow, No. 146, 27 March 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR, suggests that LEN had been held when he made his unwise return visit to a Soviet ship:

  **In order to provide a stronger guard over LEN the Ship Probationers on board the 'IL'ICH' are being used.**

- SF —> Moscow, No. 161, 13 April 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR, concerns various Fifth Line matters. The last part of the message that could be recovered concerns Ivan Len:

  **The deserter LEN has been transferred from the 'IL'ICH' to the 'OLA'; the 'OLA' starts her trip on 15 April; warn VLADIVOSTOK.**

- SF —> Moscow, No. 164, 14 April 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR, is the last we hear of Ivan Len in Venona:

  **On 14 April at 2 a.m. the deserter LEN escaped from the ship 'OLA', taking advantage of a propitious 'row' — people sharing bunks and of the temporary absence from the exterior guard post of the duty seaman KhOKhLOV. It was established that LEN had already left but where exactly wasn't known. We entrusted to the boatswain MANUILOV the task of making inquiries [3 groups unrecovered]. About 11 a.m. MANUILOV met LEN leaving**

**the house. LEN reproached MANUILOV for not dissuading him from the visit to the Soviet ship and said that while**

**[5 groups unrecovered]**

**he broke open the door of the cabin and left. LEN said that [1 group unrecovered] to the Immigration Authorities.**

Problems with VITALIJ and Others

The work and general behavior of Pavel K. Revizorov, covername VITALIJ, was not satisfactory to the Residency or the Center, but he remained on duty. In a message of 30 March 1944,[50] KhARON told VIKTOR that another KGB officer, Vyacheslav Misluk (covername: MAZhOR) reported "the following compromising information about VITALIJ":

**[24 groups unrecovered]**

**on the ship and talk is afloat in the office. The girl became pregnant. On 27 March 1944 VITALIJ turned for help to an American member of the STORE [the SGPC, rlb] OSIPOVIChA (ZhUChKA) ....**

It will be recalled that covername ZhUChKA, which means WATCH–DOG was a naturalized U.S. citizen and apparent KGB source. VITALIJ seems to have turned to her for some assistance relating to his love life and then, as mentioned earlier, assigned her to the search for the deserter Elizabeth Kuznetsova.

Following are three examples of problem cases of that period involving entanglements with Americans, and heavy drinking.

- SF —> Moscow, No. 159 12 April 1944, (a message cited earlier) contains these fragments about an unidentified Soviet:

**Imitating [3 groups unrecovered] drinking heavily and is living with the American woman KOLUMBA**

**[11 groups unrecovered]**

**business considerations, is hiding however his absence from work**[51]

- SF —> Moscow, No. 168, 16 April 1944, KhARON to VIKTOR concerns a Soviet person suspected of being in touch with a person connected to U.S. CI services:

**According to information from KIT [u/i] of the steamship 'ENTHUSIAST', the inspector of the People's Commissariat of the Fishing Industry in SEATTLE, PROTsENKO, A.E. is in touch with suspect elements. He has friendly relations with an interpreter of the TODD plant — Boris KORVIN, whom we suspect of being in touch with the COMPETITORS.**[52] **PROTsENKO is a frequent guest at his place and has [5 groups unrecoverable] visits also the interpreter VINOGRDOV ...**

**[summary by rlb: possible u/i covername RYZh... 'reported that PROTsENKO visited the dock area beyond the limits of what is necessary for business ...']**

[50] SF —> Moscow, No. 151, KhARON to VIKTOR.

[51] KOLUMBA seems to have been a covername, found only once in Venona. This message may concern a Tikhon I. Kalinin of the SGPC who died in Seattle 9 May 1944.

[52] TODD plant = the Todd Shipyards in Seattle. In this instance COMPETITORS = the FBI or ONI.

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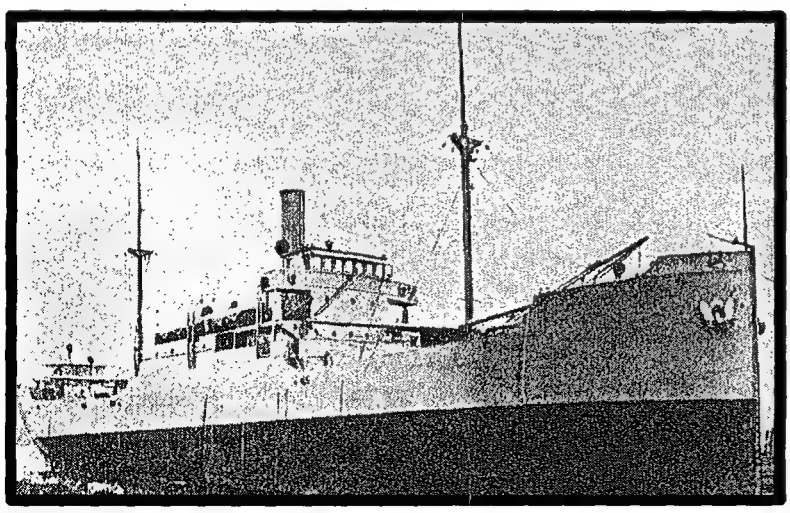
SF —> Moscow, No. 293, 11 July 1944 (previously cited) may be about the spotting and assessing of candidates for "Ship's Probationers". The message mentions the first mate of the ship "PISHCHEVAYA INDUSTRIYA" and goes on to say:

> **conduct of OVERChUK is defiant and the captain characterizes him negatively. Together with OVERChUK was drinking the engineer of [a refrigerator ship]**

Some Blasts from Moscow Center and a Reorganization



**Another Russian seaman deserted from the "YaKUT" but was returned to the KGB by American authorities.**

In Moscow —> SF, No. 276, 29 August 1944, SEMEN criticized the security work of the San Francisco Residency. This message gives a good summary of the ships' agent ("probationer") network:

> **In July in PORTLAND a stoker, Andrej Kuz'mich SOKOV, deserted from the S.S. 'YaKUT'. The American authorities helped to catch him and, with the assistance of VITALIJ, he was put back in the ship and on 2nd August was handed over in PETROPAVLOVSK. You did not inform us of the fact that SOKOV had deserted and been caught. The case of SOKOV is yet another instance of feebleness in preventing desertion and it is primarily poor work with the probationer network in ships which accounts for this. Since November 1943 the names of more than 500 probationers in ships have, at various times, been given to KhARON and then to you in order that liaison may be established with them. Yet the information about the probationers has not even been reported in good time to VITALIJ and the other group leaders. As a result of this they do not liase with the probationers in PORTLAND and other ports. The staff of probationers and residents does not change basically – this is particularly true of the latter – and consequently, having our information about them,**
>
> **[51 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **extradition of deserters, which, however, is not done in most cases. Liaison with the cadre workers must be put right. Pass on our reports on probationers in good time and make maximum use of them in checking up on crews and averting acts of treason.**

The same day, SEMEN sent another message to San Francisco concerning an incident not otherwise found in the traffic:[53]

> **Urgently reply to our number 27 of 29th July, 1944 on the question of VITALIJ's loss of his personal documents.**

San Francisco briefly replied to Moscow's complaints about lack of timely reporting, and then added another case to the list. SF —> Moscow, No. 329, 31 August 1944, DAR (the new Resident, Grigorij Kasparov) to SEMEN contains three internal messages, the first two are quoted as follows:

> **The delay in reports arises because there aren't any contacts except for my personal trips. Moreover the personal trips are limited by the necessity of working in accordance with my cover. During the past month we also haven't had any telegraphic contact with the Center.**[54]
>
> **On 15 August the second mate of the ship 'NAZhIM, Andrej Vasil'evich MALYGIN, disappeared in SEATTLE. In connection with the fact that MALYGIN didn't take any of his belongings and left in an old suit the workers of the Commission are conjecturing the possibility of an accident. Details are being ascertained.**

Malygin had in fact deserted, as DAR reported to SEMEN in SF —> Moscow, No. 346, 11 September 1944. DAR also said that he had prepared a press release, in an effort to get local assistance in preventing desertions:

> **I instructed the convoy officer in SEATTLE to trace MALYGIN through the police. It turned out that MALYGIN at that time was already at the immigration bureau where he had gone soon after leaving the ship. In the line of the [Consulate] I have composed a letter concerning the shortcomings in the provision of services for ships of the Fishing Industry and concerning cases of desertion which [3 groups unrecovered] local Press. I am sending you a copy of the letter by post.**

In Moscow —> SF, No. 379, 16 November 1944, SEMEN announced a complete re-organization of Fifth Line work on the West Coast. This well-recovered message is particularly interesting as it lays out KGB plans and doctrine in very specific detail:

> **According to a plan approved by Comrade PETROV [Beria] on 26th October 1944, a special sub-residency for the Fifth Line is being established within the framework of your residency. It will not be subject to the authority**
>
> **[16 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **right to make independent decisions [1 group unrecovered] questions relating to the operations of the agent network and to have direct communications with the CENTER. You [6 groups unrecovered] of the sub-residency in accordance with instructions of the**

[53] Moscow —> SF, No. 277, 29 August 1944, from SEMEN.

[54] These communications difficulties, discussed earlier in the study, involved difficulty in registering the new signatory, DAR, with U.S. Censorship. Furthermore, all Russian traffic was now being routed through the War Department communications center in the Pentagon.



(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 3024(i)
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

**TU[55], directing the work of the sub-resident and taking necessary steps for the successful**

**[63 groups unrecoverable]**

**, LOS ANGELES. The following changes among the permanent staff workers[56] of the sub-residency have been approved:**

**1. MALYJ[57], whom we are transferring from VANCOUVER, is appointed to help your deputy with the work of the port of SAN FRANCISCO.**

**2. VITALIJ is being recalled home and VOVChEK is appointed senior man in PORTLAND. YAKOV, whom we are transferring from OTTAWA, is appointed second worker in PORTLAND.[58]**

**3. VOLKOV, who especially at the beginning will need a lot of help, remains in SEATTLE.[59]**

**4. PETR[60] remains in LOS ANGELES.**

**The permanent staff workers listed above, will for the time being work under cover of Inspectors of the Purchasing Commission. After the Merchant Fleet has succeeded in setting up in the USA a special department for vessels sailing to foreign ports, the permanent staff workers will be transferred to the strength of that department as Personnel Inspectors. In the meantime it is essential to ensure, through the management of the Purchasing Commission, that the permanent staff workers are in a position which will give them just the right kind of influence to establish conditions favorable to their work in our line.**

**According to the plan approved by Comrade PETROV the sub-residency is charged with:**

**1. Development of counter-intelligence work among sailors of Soviet vessels to detect and suppress recruiting and anti-Soviet work by foreign intelligence services.**

**2. Detection of anti-Soviet and traitorous elements among the crews of vessels sailing to foreign ports.**

**3. Prevention of sabotage in Soviet vessels sailing to foreign ports and safeguarding cargoes and vessels from sabotage.**

**Inform each permanent staff worker of these tasks, explaining them in detail and outlining practical measures. This activity will depend on the skillful co-ordination of the work of the ship and shore probationers. The work of the VLADIVOSTOK office is being reorganized to fit in with the tasks indicated, and for this purpose special instructions are also being issued by Comrade PETROV. Start carrying out the present instructions**

[55] TU = believed to have been an abbreviation referring to some directorate (Upravlenie), and T possibly standing for Transport, Technical or Territorial.

[56] "permanent staff workers" = KGB officers (as opposed to co-optees, agents, informants).

[57] MALYJ = u/i

[58] VITALIJ = Pavel Kuzmich Revizorov; VOVChEK = probably Aleksandr Bochek; YaKOV = u/i.

[59] VOLKOV = Andrej R. Orlov.

[60] PETR = Aleksandr P. Grachev.

**without waiting for SERGEJ's arrival.[61] See the permanent staff workers personally and give each one a specific briefing. Proceed with the preliminary selection [2 groups unrecovered] candidates from amongst Soviet workers who have been vetted and who are connected with our vessels and port operations, with a view to employing them as contact men between the permanent staff workers and the ships' probationer network. The object, once the appointment of these candidates has been confirmed, is to make greater use of ships' probationers and to succeed in meeting every single one of the ships' residents.[62]**

**We require:**

**1. that each permanent staff worker should present to you a monthly report concerning the work.**

**2. that a report should be sent each month, addressed to SEMEN, concerning the work of the sub-residency and enclosing the reports of the permanent staff workers.**

**3. that the covernames used should be reported immediately – explain**

**[70 groups unrecovered/unrecoverable]**

"At the Fun Fair"

Like the New York Residency, the KGB San Francisco investigated sudden or mysterious deaths from a counterintelligence and criminal standpoint. Three examples from different West Coast cities follow:

• SF —> Moscow, No. 37, 4 February, from PETR to SEMEN, probably concerns an event in the Los Angeles area as PETR was a KGB Fifth Line officer assigned there. PETR sent four internal messages in No. 37, the first of which follows:

**Reference No. 18 [not available]**

**On 4th January 1945 BAZhIN, Evgenij Nikolaevich, went ashore together with two sailors. They went riding on a roller coaster and had been drinking. The pair of them returned on board the vessel after losing BAZhIN at the fun fair. On investigation it was established that as a result of lack of discipline BAZhIN's absence was only discovered on 5th January 1945. The captain thought he was on board [9 groups unrecoverable] was floating in the tug anchorage area and was identified. An expert examination in the presence of our worker did not reveal any traces of violence. The body is being cremated. B. was in very good spirits. He was considered a conscientious worker. He was very keen to get home as his wife was due to have a baby soon – he had bought presents for the baby. He had not**

[61] SERGEJ = KGB officer Viktor V. Afanasev, who would become head of the new Fifth Line sub-Residency in San Francisco, and a message signatory. As noted earlier, there were for a time in 1945, two senior KGB officers in San Francisco who had the covername SERGEJ (the other being Pravdin, TDY from NYC to work the UN Conference in San Francisco).

[62] Three types of KGB sources may be under discussion here. "Contact men", who were Soviets at the U.S. ports who would be recruited to keep in touch with the Probationers (the actual agents/informants). The Center had recognized that it was impossible for the KGB officers to make all these contacts. The third category, "ships' residents" is less certain: perhaps it means the chief probationer on each ship?

**been expressing any discontent.**[63]

- SF —> Moscow, No. 125, 30 March 1945, SERGEJ to SEMEN:

**On 27 March of this year in SEATTLE there committed suicide the boatswain of the ship 'LUGA', LITVINENKO, Mikhail**

**[14 groups unrecovered]**

- SF —> Moscow, No. 141, 5 April 1945, SERGEJ to SEMEN:

**On 3rd April at PORTLAND on board the ship 'DZhURMA' Boatswain ZAJChENKO Aleksej Yanovich committed suicide.**

**In the evening of 2nd April ZAJChENKO returned from the town drunk, for which he was placed by the senior sailor on board, BOBROV, [3 groups unrecovered] cabin. On the morning of 3rd April ZAJChENKO was found in the cabin hanging by a neck-tie.**

**On 6th April I am leaving for PORTLAND where [7 groups unrecovered] ZAJChENKO.**

The Desertions Continue

Messages concerning desertions continue right up to end of the Venona readability period. In any event, by 1946, with the end of the war and of Lend Lease, far fewer Russian ships would have been calling at West Coast ports. From the KGB perspective the situation never got any better, and at least one of their agents even deserted. A sampling of 1945–46 messages to the Center:

- SF —> Moscow, No. 4, 3 January 1945, DAR to SEMEN reported (extract follows):

**at the beginning of December in the S.S. 'KAMChATNEFT' there was sent home [A.M. Ivanov] chief engineer of the whaler 'ALEUT'. On 24th November IVANOV went out of the hostel and did not appear for three days. At the end of this time he was found in a police station in a drunken condition .... according to documentary data IVANOV served several years' imprisonment for shipwreck when he was captain of the icebreaker 'DAVYDOV'.**

- SF —> Moscow, No. 164, 16 April 1945, SERGEJ to SEMEN reported a multiple desertion which included an agent:

**On 14th April the following three men deserted from the S.S. 'LOVOVSKIJ' in SEATTLE:**

**Stoker Aleksandr Semenovich TURAEV, born 1917,**

**Seaman Petr Fedorovich KUZLYaKIN, born 1927,**

**Carpenter Roman Sergeevich PORUBOV, born 1916.**

**PORUBOV is the probationer ZUEV, from the VLADIVOSTOK office. It is not know where the deserters are. VOLKOV has taken steps to [10 groups unrecovered].**

- In SF —> Moscow, Nos. 238, 239, 7 May 1945, to SEMEN, signature not recovered but presumably SERGEJ, the latter gave a long account of the search for the three deserters mentioned above. At least 700

[63] PETR's third internal message contains a possible tradecraft term not otherwise seen: "postmen". PETR said that NIK, a Fifth Line personality (rather than the other NIK : Amadeo Sabatini) had told him that, "he has a permanent contact in the HOUSE [the Center?] through the Postmen in Vladivostok. He indicated that detailed contact had ceased. Please point out the breach of regulations to VLADIVOSTOK and put an end to the sending of postmen."

groups in the message were unrecovered/unrecoverable, but what is available shows the considerable effort the KGB was putting into the search. SERGEJ took the story from the beginning: "On 14 April PORUBOV, TURAEV and KUZLYaKIN did not have liberty from the ship, after work they were in the crew's quarters and played dominoes until evening ...". Apparently the three then left the ship and went to the police, giving fictitious names. KGB officer Andrej Orlov, covername VOLKOV, had first tried to get them back by using the long-standing KGB method in cases of defection of Soviet personnel:

> **The captain of the ship 'LOZOVSKIJ' at the suggestion of VOLKOV submitted a statement to the police which showed that the deserters stole 190 dollars which had been collected by the crew for the purchase of provisions.**

SERGEJ continued, "Having arrived in SEATTLE I mobilized a search ...". Very little of the rest of the message could be read, but we can tell that some interesting people were drawn into the search including VLADISLOV, who was LT Nikolaj J. Redin of the GRU–Naval, soon to be arrested by the FBI, and DYaDYa, who was the long-time KGB agent and American C.P. official Isaac Folkoff. The Consul–General also "made an official representation about the search".

SERGEJ wasn't doing much better than his predecessors. On 23 May 1945, two more seamen deserted in Seattle. They went to the "immigration authorities in SEATTLE and refused to return to the Soviet Union...".[64]

By mid–July 1945, SERGEJ had put in place another reorganization and re-deployed some of his personnel – about whom he had some good words to say, even for ShAKhOV who was a, "good worker [despite the] squabbles in PORTLAND, in particular the question of the gift to him by the Americans of a gold watch ..". SERGEJ continued:

> **To the job of port representative there has been named the cadre worker PETR.[65] All our cadre workers are already at their locations in accordance with the new deployment and have started work. NIK has arrived safely in PORTLAND [1 group garbled] I shall have a rendezvous with him. In SEATTLE [3 groups unrecovered] with the help of the agent SUKhUMSKIJ[66] we have succeeded in penetrating the organization of the priest DANIL'ChIK. By this maneuver we have pinpointed the existence of a widely-ramified White Guard organization in SEATTLE working on our seamen in [1 group unrecovered] with the police and intelligence organs. Our agentura[67] has gotten the organization's password(s) for meeting, and the agent SUKhUMSKIJ has succeeded in seeing, in the apartments of the organization, many of our traitors. All detailed information on this matter and our proposals have been sent you with MUKhIN. Telegraph your decision on them.**

[64] SF —> Moscow, No. 283, 26 May 1945, SERGEJ to SEMEN.

[65] "cadre worker" = another KGB term for KGB officers; PETER = Aleksandr P. Grachev, formerly of the Los Angeles sub-Residency and some-time signatory.

[66] SUKhUMSKIJ = Boris M. Boguslavskij, presumably a Russian–born American.

[67] Agentura = agent network.

*XX. THE KGB IN SAN FRANCISCO*

In messages of June–September 1945 San Francisco reported on the whereabouts of some of the deserters. The following three messages (the first an extract, the other two quoted in full) are separated by asterisk and identified in the footnote:[68]

> **We are reporting available information concerning the whereabouts of traitors to the fatherland:**
>
> **PIKA sails as a seaman on an American ship.**
>
> **STARKOV sails on an American ship from [4 groups unrecovered].**
>
> **SEREDA sails on an American ship**
>
> **TERENT'EV lives in [39 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **in SEATTLE**[69]
>
> **********
>
> **According to an official statement from the immigration authorities in SEATTLE. a job was found for the traitor DYaDENKO in 1944 [1 group unrecovered] 'VILLE D'ANVERS' under the Belgian flag.**
>
> **********
>
> **The traitor to the fatherland KOVAL'ChUK, Tofil [2 groups unrecovered] on a farm in the TACOMA area in the state of Washington. To KOVAL'ChUK we are organizing [3 groups unrecovered]**

In SF —> Moscow, No. 500, 24 September 1945, gives an account of SERGEJ's use of the legal system to get a deserter back into Soviet hands. This message, signed by SERGEJ, bears an unusual routing header:

> **To NEW YORK for SERGEJ, copy to MOSCOW for SEMEN.**

This meant that the message went to Moscow for re-send to the New York covername SERGEJ – Viktor V. Pravdin, then the acting NYC Resident – with a drop copy for SEMEN in Moscow. The message:

> **The Immigration Bureau in PHILADELPHIA has under consideration the case of a traitor to the fatherland, Aleksandr TURAEV, a seaman on the Soviet vessel 'LOZOVSKIJ', who deserted in TACOMA in April this year.**[70] **TURAEV was arrested in the LOS ANGELES area in August of this year, and is in the immigration prison. We succeeded in obtaining from TURAEV's lawyer an official letter in which the lawyer confirms TURAEV's loyalty to his native land. A copy of this document was sent to the immigration authorities in support of our demand concerning the deportation of T. to the USSR. The immigration authorities in LOS ANGELES consider that the case can be decided in our favor. With the aim of putting pressure on the outcome of the case we request you visit the heads of the immigration authorities with this demand, and get a court decision concerning the deportation of T. to the Union. Please communicate the result.**

[68] All three messages SF —> Moscow: No. 295, 1 June 1945; No. 397, 21 July 1945; No. 436, 13 August 1945. The first and third messages SERGEJ to SEMEN; the second message, MAJ to SEMEN.

[69] These four, Ivan M. Pika, Vladimir B. Starkov, Aleksandr Terentev, and Georgij D. Sereda, had deserted ship in March and July 1944, all but Pika from the S.S. 'OST'.

[70] See above, for the message about the triple desertion from that ship.

"Our Work Failed"

In SF —> Moscow, Nos. 3,4,5 of 2 January 1946, address and signature not recovered, SERGEJ or MAJ sent what looks like a final defense of their performance in dealing with deserters. Unfortunately about 420 groups in the message could not be recovered, including the first 372 groups, after which:

> **information of interest which was reported to you by telegram in good time. A series of documents were put out about traitors to the fatherland, about cultivations, about the BARZh affair [4 groups unrecovered] which were sent to you. On our initiative a report was presented to Comrade MOLOTOV about traitors to the fatherland which was composed by us with a note**
>
> **[7 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **Our work failed**
>
> **[10 groups unrecovered]**
>
> **preventative work on the ships.**[71]

[71] San Francisco may have been describing some security education material they had prepared for the crews and a presentation for Molotov to use in diplomatic circles. BARZh = u/i covername. The end of the message may be on a different subject as there is the phrase, "the illegal R." (unidentified).

*XX. THE KGB IN SAN FRANCISCO*

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